



*The North Dakota Newspaper Association*

# **Better Newspaper Contest**

## **How to Use the Online Contest System (BetterBNC)**

**Start your contest entry at:  
[www.betterbnc.com/ndna](http://www.betterbnc.com/ndna)**



# 2021

## North Dakota Newspaper Association Better Newspaper Contest Upload Instructions

*Below are detailed, step-by-step instructions for uploading contest entries to the online contest system, BetterBNC ([www.betterbnc.com/ndna](http://www.betterbnc.com/ndna)).*

### 1. Go to the site.

Go to [www.BetterBNC.com/ndna](http://www.BetterBNC.com/ndna). Choose the “Enter Here” button on the right side.



### 2. Log-in.

The contestant login pop-up window will appear once you choose the “Enter Here” button. You will first select “Contestant Manager” or “Authorized Entrant” (it will default to Contestant Manager, and we suggest leaving it on this option; see more information below). Choose your newspaper from the dropdown “Media Organization” list (all newspapers are listed alphabetically by city name), enter your password and click “Login.”

*Note: If you set up log-in credentials last year, you can simply log-in and skip to Step 4! (Can't remember your password? Click “Forgot Password.”) If this is your first time however, continue with Step 2. All entrants will use the password **bnc** to log-in for the first time. After your first log-in, you will be prompted to enter a new password. Be sure to keep this new password in a safe place, as it will be your password next year when entering the contest.*

We suggest setting up a Contestant Manager to handle all contest entries for your whole paper. The system allows only one Contestant Manager per paper. If you'd like more than one person to also do contest entries, the Contestant Manager will need to create Authorized Entrant accounts. The Contestant Manager will be able to enter for multiple people, and see all entries made for their paper (including those made from Authorized Entrant accounts). An Authorized Entrant can only see the entries that they entered, and can only enter items under their own name.

First time entering online? Use password **bnc** to log-in for the first time. If your newspaper entered last year, your password remains the same. Can't remember your password? Click “Forgot Password.”

### 3. Change password and update information.

Your first successful login will take you to the “Change Password” screen, where you are required to change your password before you proceed. Change it to something you can remember easily and keep it in a safe place, as you will need to use this password again next time you enter the contest. *Password must be a minimum of 6 characters long, have at least one capital letter, one lower case letter, and have at least one number.*

You must also **UPDATE YOUR NAME AND EMAIL ADDRESS** on this page. This will ensure that you can retrieve your password if you forget it, and that NDNA can contact you if we have questions about your entries. Be sure to also check the box next to “I agree to the Better BNC Terms of Use” and click Submit when you are done.

You are **REQUIRED** to update all fields before you will be allowed to continue. Be sure to use a valid email address. Later, an important confirmation email will be sent to this address.

### 4. Manage your entries.

This is the main entry page, the one you'll see each time you log in. From here you'll submit, edit, and manage your contest entries. At the upper right side of this page, you will see your circulation group designation and your total number of entries.

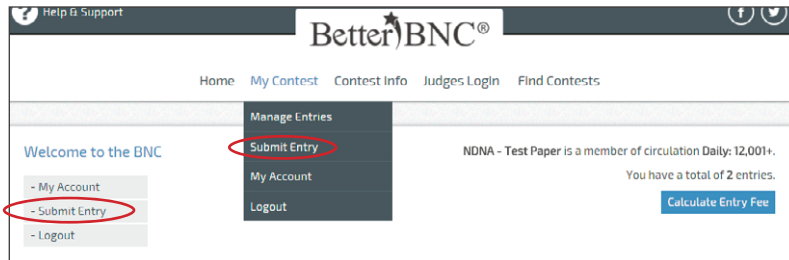
You'll also see a button that says, “Calculate Entry Fee.” That will take you to the summary of entries form to calculate your entries and contest fees. You will use that button AFTER you have submitted all entries (see Step 9 for details on calculating fees).

Of course, when you first visit the “Manage Entries” page, the entry list will be empty. What you will see on that page are three links: “My account,” “Submit entry” and “Logout.” You can also access more choices from the top pull down menus.

If you haven't already, click “My account” and update your contact information to ensure that you can retrieve your password and be contacted with any questions about your entries.

## 5. Submit an entry.

Click “Submit entry” on the Manage Entries page or in the dropdown “My contest” menu to go to the entry submission form.



Submit each entry by filling in the information requested, working from top to bottom. The division you choose will determine the list of categories, and the category you choose will reveal other form fields, including category descriptions and rules. You **MUST** fill out one form for each item (news story, ad, photo, etc.) entered.

Please note: only **ONE entry per person/team is allowed per category.**

A screenshot of the 'Submit Entry' form on the BetterBNC website. The form is titled 'Submit Entry' and includes a header with 'home my contest contest info judges login contact BetterBNC'. The main content area is divided into several sections: 'Create New Entry' with a 'Division' dropdown (highlighted with a red circle) and a 'Category' dropdown (highlighted with a red circle); 'Headline or Title of Entry' with a text field containing 'Icy roads cause concern for cities' (highlighted with a red circle); 'Upload Attachment & Links' with a 'Get File(s) to Attach to this Entry' section (highlighted with a red circle) and a 'Browse' button; 'Comments, Credits & Other Info' with a 'Comments from Entrant' text area and a 'Who should be credited for this entry?' section (highlighted with a red circle) containing a table with 'First Name' and 'Last Name' columns; and a 'Submit Entry' button at the bottom (highlighted with a red circle). The form also includes a 'Calculate Entry Fee' button and a 'Manage Entries' link.

a. Select the division.

b. Select the contest category.

c. Complete the “Headline or title of entry” field. Be sure to enter something for a title that will identify the entry so the judge can easily identify it on the page.

d. Upload the example(s).

- For PDF uploads, click “Browse” to select the file you wish to upload. Repeat this process for each example needed for this entry, selecting “Browse & Attach More Files” for additional attachments.
- To submit URL links (only allowed in Best Website and Special Awards categories), simply enter the URL(s) in the “Get Links to Attach to This Entry” fields.

e. Optional: enter comments in the **Comments** field. This field is not necessary for most entries. It is available, however, if you’d like to leave special comments for the judges to see.

f. Enter name(s) for credit purposes.

Enter person(s) or team who should receive credit for this entry.

g. Click “Submit entry.”

Once you select “Submit Entry,” an entry label will be created. For entries being submitted electronically, your entry is complete (no need to print the label) and you may Submit Another Entry, Manage Entries or Logout.

*Note: There is a size limit (5 megabytes) on uploaded PDF files. If your PDF file is larger than that, you will not be able to upload it successfully. **Judges may not be able to view files that are larger than 5MB.** For detailed information on how to make your PDFs as small as possible, see “FAQ” at the end of this guide.*



## 6. Entry labels for mailed entries (to be used for Overall Design Excellence and General Excellence only!).

If your entry needs to be mailed to NDNA (again, Overall Design Excellence and General Excellence only), you still must complete the online form for each entry, as described in the previous step. The judges will still be scoring and awarding mailed entries online. Complete all of the entry information but do not upload an attachment or URL. You will simply select "Submit Entry" and a label will be created. Print this label and staple it to the top issue in your bundle. Be sure to bind all issues together securely with a rubber band or binder clip, enclose in an envelope, and mail to NDNA.

**Labels MUST be created through the online contest system;** the judges will enter their responses online according to the label you've affixed to the tearsheets.

The Entry has been saved.

**This Page is Your Official Entry Form.**

FOR CATEGORIES THAT REQUIRE MAIL-IN ENTRY (Overall Design Excellence and General Excellence):

Please print this label and STAPLE to the top issue of your bundle. Be sure to bind all issues together securely with a rubber band or binder clip, enclose in an envelope, and mail to NDNA.

Mailed entries and payment must be postmarked by the contest deadline and sent to:

NDNA - Contest  
1435 Interstate Loop  
Bismarck, ND 58503

Entry Details:  
Media Organization: NDNA - Test Paper (zzz)  
Title or Headline: General Excellence - NDNA Test Paper  
Division: Special  
Category: 62 General Excellence  
Entry Code: zzz01  
Credits: Staff  
Entry made by **Kelli Richey, Contestant Manager** on YEAR-MO-DA 17:00:00

★★★★★  
Special CIRDL CAT61 zzz01  
NDNA - Test Paper  
General Excellence

DO NOT HIT YOUR BACK BUTTON

[Submit Another Entry](#) or [Manage Entries](#) | [Logout](#)

A label will appear after each entry you make online. **You will only need to print a label for the Overall Design Excellence and General Excellence categories.** This label will be attached to your bundle of issues that will be mailed in to NDNA.

## 7. Continue this process until all entries have been submitted. After you've successfully added two entries, you will receive the following pop-up message (a) and a confirmation email will automatically be sent to the email address you provided (b). When you receive the email, click on the link provided to activate your account. After validating your account, you will be asked to update your account information one last time, in more detail (c). All fields are required, except "Website Address," which is optional. After you update your account, you can continue adding entries.

FOR CATEGORIES THAT REQUIRE MAIL-IN ENTRY:

Please print this label and STAPLE to the top issue of your bundle. Be sure to bind all issues together securely with a rubber band or binder clip, enclose in an envelope, and mail to NDNA.

Mailed entries and payment must be postmarked by the contest deadline and sent to:

NDNA - Contest  
1435 Interstate Loop  
Bismarck, ND 58503

Entry Details:  
Media Organization: NDNA - Test Paper  
Title or Headline: Purple Wave Advertising  
Division: Advertising  
Category: 36 Agricultural Ad  
Entry Code: zzz01  
Credits: Neal Newspaper  
Entry made by **Kelli Richey, Contestant Manager** on YEAR-MO-DA 17:00:00

Your account is being converted to a new type of account called 'Contestant Manager'. With this new account, you can make entries on behalf of your media organization, authorize and manage others who can make entries, and control all entries.

But first we need to validate you as the proper person for the job. An email has been sent to the Primary Contact Person on record. Locate that email and follow the instructions to complete the validation. After that you will log in as Contestant Manager.

OK

★★★★★  
Advertising CIRDL CAT36 zzz01  
NDNA - Test Paper  
Agricultural Ad

Examples "a" (left), "b" (bottom left), and "c" (below) show the confirmation process when first submitting entries.

From: BetterBNC Admin [bnc@smalltownpapers.com]  
To: kelli@ndna.com  
Cc:  
Subject: [BNC] BetterBNC email validation -- Contestant Manager-0026999

Sent: Mon 12/15/YEAR 1:14 PM

Hello,

Your recent activity on the BetterBNC website has generated this email, which requires action on your part.

In order to continue, your "Contestant" account is being converted to "Contestant Manager".

After clicking the validation link below you will log into BetterBNC as a Contestant Manager, where you can manage all aspects of your account and authorize other people to make entries on your behalf.

Please do not share your login information with anyone.

Please click on the following link to activate your account:

<http://betternewspapercontest.com/newspapers/verify/MTQ3NTQ5>

If you are unable to click the link, you can paste it into your browser.

If you have any questions please contact your Contest Administrator or BetterBNC through the website.

Thank you.

Need Help? Contact us through the BetterBNC website.  
Please do not reply to this email.

Home my contest contest info judges login contact BetterBNC

Edit Contestant Manager

**Edit Contestant Manager**

Owner: none  
Contestant: NDNA - Test Paper  
Contestant Code: xxx  
Frequency: Daily  
Circ Group: Daily: 12,000+

**Primary Contestant Contact Information - Contestant Manager**

First Name: Kelli  
Last Name: Richey  
Contestant Manager Email: kelli@ndna.com  
Confirm Email: kelli@ndna.com  
Contestant Phone: 701-395-7315  
Contestant Website:  
Password: \*\*\*\*\*  
Confirm Password: \*\*\*\*\*  
Password must be a minimum of 8 characters long, have at least one capital letter, one lower case letter, and have at least one number.

**Mailing Address**

Number and Street: 1425 Interstate Loop  
City: Bismarck  
State/Province: ND  
Zip/Postal code: 58503  
Country: USA

**Shipping/Physical Address**

☒ Same as Mailing Address  
Number and Street:  
City:  
State/Province:  
Zip/Postal code:  
Country:

**Secondary Contestant Contact Information**

Contact Email:  
Phone:

## 8. Review your entry list.

In the list of entries on the “Manage Entries” page, the Actions column at the far right contains four links: “Label,” “Edit,” “Disable” and “Delete.”

“Label” displays the entry label associated with that entry. You won’t need the label for an electronic entry, but you can use this link to update the label if you edit an entry that is being mailed to NDNA, or if you need to reprint the label.

“Edit” lets you view and change information in the entry form. If you change an entry in a mailed category, you’ll need to display and reprint the label for that entry. You will not be able to edit an entry after the entry deadline has passed.

“Disable” essentially removes that entry from the contest, although you’ll still see it in a separate “Disabled Entries” list. Use this function if you want to make an entry inactive without deleting it completely.

“Delete” removes that entry completely; this action cannot be undone.

“Enable” will appear in place of “Disable” once you’ve disabled an entry. By clicking “Enable,” you can restore a previously disabled entry, if desired.

Please note the “Calculate Entry Fee” option in this window (below). You will need to click this link in the next step.

Welcome to the BNC

NDNA - Test Paper is a member of circulation Daily: 12,001+.

You have a total of 2 entries.



[- My Account](#)  
[- Submit Entry](#)  
[- Logout](#)

[Calculate Entry Fee](#)

NDNA Better Newspaper Contest

Manage Entries -- Entry Deadline MO-DA-YEAR

Entries

Entrant	Category	Title	Pages	Files/URLs	Created	Actions
Contestant Manager	01 Reporting	Icy Roads cause concern for cities	1		YEAR-MO-DA 17:00:00	<a href="#">Label</a> <a href="#">Edit</a> <a href="#">Disable</a> <a href="#">Delete</a>
Contestant Manager	36 Agricultural Ad	Purple Wave Auction	1		YEAR-MO-DA 17:00:00	<a href="#">Label</a> <a href="#">Edit</a> <a href="#">Disable</a> <a href="#">Delete</a>



## 9. Calculate Entry Fees and Submit Your Payment.

Once you've submitted and uploaded all of your entries, you will need to complete the entry process by tallying your entries and the total entry fee due. The contest fee is \$8.00 per entry for all categories except the Special Awards categories; there are no fees for these.

From the "Manage Entries" page, select "Calculate Entry Fee" (shown on previous page). On the "Entry Fee Calculation" page (shown below), you will see a breakdown of all of the entries that are being submitted for your newspaper. The total entry fee will be displayed here. **Be sure to check the "Select Entries to Pay" box for each entry you are submitting and wish to pay.**

If paying by check, select the "Pay by Check" option, then print a copy of your entry list (the "Entry Fee Calculation" page shown below) and mail it along with a check to NDNA to complete payment. You may also pay by credit card or PayPal. On this same page (shown below), select "Pay Now with Card" and a new area at the bottom of the "Entry Fee Calculation" page will appear to enter credit card information, or you will now also be able to select "Check out with PayPal" and will be taken to the PayPal site to login and pay with your PayPal account. Be sure to print your Credit Card or PayPal payment confirmation page and mail or fax to NDNA so we have proof of your payment on file. **Please send your check payments with entry list** (again, shown below) **or Credit Card/PayPal confirmation page to: NDNA - Contest, 1435 Interstate Loop, Bismarck, ND 58503. Fax: 800-223-8185.**

You are managing content for the NDNA Better Newspaper Contest

NDNA - Test Paper Circulation Group Daily: 12,001+

As of MO/DA/YEAR 5:00 pm

Disabled entries are not in fee calculation.

How to pay:  
\* Use the check boxes to select the entries you want to pay  
\* Click the "Pay By Card" button to pay using a credit card, debit card or via PayPal.  
\* Click the "Pay by Check" button if sending payment by mail.  
\* When done, print a copy for your records. After the entry deadline, you will not be able to access this page.

When you click on the PayPal button you will be taken off BetterBNC to the sanctioning organization payment cart. Carefully follow the on screen instructions to ensure proper handling of your entry fees. All financial transactions are directly with the sanctioning organization, not BetterBNC. For help with PayPal transactions, contact your contest administrator.

Print

Entrant	Division	Category	Title	Entry Fee	Select Entries to Pay Select All	Payment Status
Contestant Manager	News & Editorial	01 Reporting	Icy Roads cause concern for cities	\$8.00	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Not received
			News & Editorial subtotal	\$8.00		
Contestant Manager	Advertising	36 Agricultural Ad	Purple Wave Auction	\$8.00	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Not received
			Advertising subtotal	\$8.00		
						<div>Secured by iThenticate 2015-11-29 ABOUT SSL CERTIFICATES</div>
			Total Entry Fee Due	\$16.00		
			Base Contest Fee	\$0.00		
			Total Entry Fee Paid	\$0.00		
			Total Outstanding Entry Fee	\$16.00		
			Please select "Pay by Check" or "Pay Now With Card." If paying by check, print this page, include with your check & mail to NDNA. If paying with Credit Card/PayPal, print Credit Card/PayPal payment confirmation & send to NDNA. Thank you!			
			Payment Amount	<input type="text" value="0"/>	<div>Pay By Check Mailed-In only</div>	<div>Pay Now With Card</div>

Transactions/Receipts History

Transactions ID	Status	Amount	Action
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# Congratulations!

**You are now finished  
with submitting your  
contest entries online!**

**Log out! There's nothing else to complete  
(unless you have entered something in the  
mail-in categories, then please be sure to  
have the label you acquired from the  
online entry process attached to the entry,  
and have it postmarked by deadline).**

**After the contest deadline you'll lose access  
to the contest site, so save entry files and  
entry lists for your records in advance  
of the contest deadline.**

**Good luck in the contest!**





# Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ's)

## Which browser should I use?

BetterBNC is optimized for the Google Chrome Browser for PC and Macintosh computers, and will be fully supported by customer support. Other browsers may work, but support may be limited.

## What is my password?

If you set up log-in credentials last year, log-in with that email and password. If you've forgotten your password, click "Forgot Password" and information will be emailed.

If it is the first time you've logged into the system, the default password is "bnc" (password is case sensitive). You will be prompted immediately to update your password and contact information.

## How do I determine my circulation group?

NDNA has pre-determined your circulation group, based on your circulation from the most current Statement of Ownerships.

## Do I have to fill out an entry form online for entries that I mail to NDNA?

Yes. You must fill out an entry form online for every single entry. The online entry process will provide you with the label you need for mail-in entries. Print label after entering online and STAPLE the label to the top issue in your bundle. Be sure to bind all issues together securely with a rubber band or binder clip, enclose in an envelope, and mail to NDNA.

## Which categories must be submitted by mail?

- 61. Overall Design Excellence
- 62. General Excellence

NDNA's mailing address is 1435 Interstate Loop, Bismarck, ND 58503. Mailed entries must be postmarked on or before the contest deadline to be accepted.

All other categories, including all Special Awards categories (First Amendment, Community Service, Public Notice Journalism, and Rookie Reporter of the Year) are entered online only, and each must include an electronic file upload of a PDF tearsheet(s) (unless otherwise specified), or in the case of the Special Awards, an attachment of all supporting documents/photos.

## There is no specific title for my entry (or there are multiple titles). What should I put here?

On the entry form, when asked to provide "Headline or Title of Entry (exactly as it appears on the page)" - please enter the title for each entry. If there is not a title on the tearsheet, please enter something that will identify the entry so the judge can easily identify it on the page. On pages with multiple stories, ads, or photos, BE SPECIFIC so judges know which to judge! (Example: "4th of July" on a page with multiple parade photos does not clearly indicate which photo to judge.)

## How do I make changes to an entry that I've already submitted?

On the "Manage Entries" page of the online contest system, identify the entry you'd like to update or change. In the "Actions" column, you can click "Label" to print a label to affix to mail-in entries. Click "Edit" to update or change an entry. You can delete uploaded files and upload new or additional files here as well. Click "Disable" if you'd like to remove the entry from view of the contest administrator and judges. Click "Delete" if you'd like to remove the entry. This action is permanent.

## What file formats are accepted for uploading?

File formats accepted by the system include .pdf, .jpg, .gif, and .png (and .doc in applicable categories). If for some reason you don't have a PDF of the tearsheet you wish to submit, it would be easy to snap a photo and submit the resulting photo file.

## What is the maximum file size?

5MB is the maximum file size allowed by the contest system.

## How can I make my PDF files smaller?

Most newspaper PDFs include high-resolution (200-300dpi) grayscale or CMYK images for printing. However, PDF contest entries will be viewed and judged on a computer monitor, which displays at low resolution (72-96dpi) in RGB color.

Changes in the resolution and color mode of images are the most effective ways to reduce file size without sacrificing quality.

1. Resolution. In PDFs, text is usually clear regardless of resolution. Resolution relates only to photos and rasterized graphics. Reducing resolution by half reduces image file size by 75%. The recommended maximum resolution of 96dpi can be enforced by Distiller settings.

2. Color mode. Converting from CMYK to RGB color will reduce image file size by another 25%. This color conversion can again be enforced by Distiller settings.

If you reduce image resolution and/or convert color mode in your entry PDFs with a PDF editor (e.g., Enfocus Pitstop or Quite A Box Of Tricks) or use the native profiling/editing tools in Acrobat 6 or later, YOU WILL NOT GAIN THE EXPECTED REDUCTION IN FILE SIZE unless you redistill the PDF afterward.

## What is the most efficient way to collect entry files to be ready for the next contest?

Save copies of all PDF files that contain entry-related pages into one place (e.g., create a folder on your server to save all the files for the next contest entry period). These may be full-issue, full-section, or individual-page PDFs that you sent to your printer or that you saved from your page layout program for other reasons. The sizes,

resolutions, color modes, and other characteristics of those PDF files can be ignored at this point.

Extract entry-related pages from any multi-page PDFs, or delete non-entry pages. Give each resulting file a clearly descriptive name. Combine into a single PDF file the pages that comprise each entry. Instructions for extracting and combining PDFs are provided below.

Once you've created all your entry PDFs, redistill each one as explained above to reduce it to the smallest practical size. It is not productive to try to reduce the sizes of individual files before combining them into complete entries. Like all changes, combining pages can increase overall PDF file size.

### **How do I extract pages from a full-issue or full section PDF?**

In Acrobat, open the PDF file, then choose "Extract Pages..." from the Document menu and follow the instructions. This will allow you to save individual or sequential pages in separate files anywhere on your system.

### **Should I combine PDF pages or files into a single file to upload, and how do I do that?**

First, please pay attention to category wording. In most cases, there will be only one story, ad, or photo allowed per person/team, so that will be just one file to upload. If it mentions "**MUST** submit 3," it means we are requiring 3 stories uploaded on one entry form, and you only have to pay one fee for this set of stories. Of course, if you have a series or a jump, these should be uploaded on one entry form also, and following are instructions if you'd like to combine the pages into one file to upload: Open the PDF file in Acrobat that is to appear first in the entry, choose "Save As..." from the File menu, and save that file with the name you'd like to give the final PDF entry. Choose "Insert Pages..." from the Document menu, choose the file that is to appear next in the entry, then specify where that file should be inserted. When all insertions have been made, save and close the PDF file. You'll need to resave the final PDFs.

### **How do I submit payment for my entries?**

The online contest system will help you figure your total amount due: Click on "Calculate Entry Fee" from the "Manage Entries" page to determine your total fee. If paying by check, select the "Pay by Check" option, then print a copy of your entry list and mail it along with a check to NDNA to complete payment. You may also pay by credit card or PayPal. Select "Pay Now with Card" to enter credit card information at the bottom of the "Entry Fee Calculation" page, or select "Check out with PayPal" to be taken to the PayPal site to login and pay with your PayPal account.

Be sure to print your Credit Card or PayPal payment confirmation page and mail or fax (800-223-8185) to NDNA so we have proof of your payment on file. Please send your check payments with entry list or Credit Card/PayPal confirmation page to:

**NDNA - Contest  
1435 Interstate Loop  
Bismarck, ND 58503**

### **What is the deadline for submitting contest entries?**

**Monday, January 18, 2021.** All entries must be uploaded to the online contest system ("BetterBNC" at [www.betterbnc.com](http://www.betterbnc.com)) by 11 p.m. CT, Monday, January 18, 2021. After the contest deadline, you'll lose access to the contest site, so save any entry files or entry lists for your records in advance of the contest deadline. Time extensions beyond the deadline will not be granted, as the site closes for judging at that time. Categories that require mail-in entry materials must be postmarked on or before the deadline. Entries postmarked later than the deadline will not be accepted. Hand deliveries must make it to the NDNA office by 5:00 p.m. of the deadline day.

### **Where can I get more help for anything I can't find here?**

Questions? We are here to help! Please contact our contest coordinator, Kelli Richey, by phone (701-595-7315) or e-mail ([kellir@ndna.com](mailto:kellir@ndna.com)).

**Please be sure to also review the "Contest Rules and Categories" packet before starting your online entry process.**

***All contest information available at: [www.ndna.com/contest](http://www.ndna.com/contest).***

