

THE ULTIMATE LIST OF WRITING COMPETITIONS

WRITER'S DIGEST  *complete guide to*

# WRITING CONTESTS

HOW TO CRAFT A  
WINNING ENTRY

**311**  
*Contests*  
For Your Work!

NOVELS  
SHORT STORIES  
CHILDREN'S  
NONFICTION & MEMOIR  
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## WRITE TO WIN

- HOW TO MAKE YOUR SUBMISSION STAND OUT
- TIPS STRAIGHT FROM THE JUDGES
- TECHNIQUES FOR POLISHING YOUR WORK

THE ULTIMATE PRIZE:  
WIN A BOOK DEAL

PLUS:  
WINNERS SHARE  
THEIR SECRETS



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# WRITER'S DIGEST COMPLETE GUIDE TO WRITING CONTESTS

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WRITER'S DIGEST MAGAZINE IS A



## EDITOR'S LETTER



## THE ULTIMATE CONTEST GUIDE

As writers, one of our fundamental goals is to simply be read. For that to happen, we need to do more than put our work away in some desk drawer. We need to break out—perhaps with a book deal, or by getting work published in a journal or magazine. But writers sometimes forget that a side door

to breakout success exists: writing contests. Winning or placing high in a contest can win you a book deal, get your writing in print, catch the attention of agents and editors, and much more. Plus, competitions are a simple way for us to test our mettle and see how our work ranks against qualified peers.

The only problem with writing contests is that they're tough to corral—calls for entries are dispersed in a variety of sources, and it's difficult to tell if better options exist in another guide you just haven't found yet. That very problem is what inspired this publication you're reading: a new, definitive guide to writing contests, with more than 300 markets listed. No matter what you write—novels, short stories, poetry, children's books, nonfiction or scripts—you'll find oodles of contests here to enter as well as myriad prizes to vie for.

But before you delve into all those listings, take a moment to educate yourself with some inside tips for entering competitions. Start with Amy Cook's "The Truth About Writing Contests" on page 6, and then take some time to learn the secrets of winners who have competed against thousands and come out on top (page 18). Then it's time to dig in, peruse the markets and see which are right for you. In these pages, you'll find contests of all shapes and sizes. Some are free to enter and others charge a nominal fee; some will be small and/or regional, while others are national, high-brow competitions that draw more than 10,000 entries.

As you set forth on your journey to win a contest (or two, or five ...), I wish you the best of luck. Perhaps I'll be at a writers' event one day when you're brought up on stage to accept an award. And then I'll say to myself: "This is a person I need to meet."

[guidetoliteraryagents.com/blog](http://guidetoliteraryagents.com/blog)

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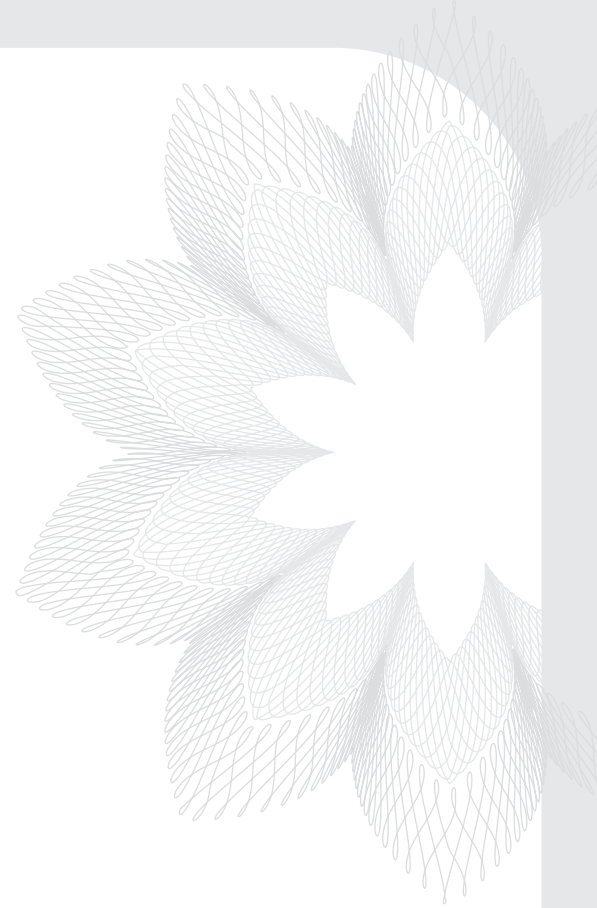
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# CONTEST BASICS

*Before you test your mettle, here  
are 7 things you need to know about  
submitting to contests.*

**W**hether you've submitted your work to contests before or this will be your first foray into the land of competitions, there are some basic need-to-know tidbits you should review before you drop that package off at the post office. Not all contests are equal, and each one has its own quirks and specifications, so make sure you know what you're getting into. These seven tips will help you get started.



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**REMEMBER: THE RULES EXIST FOR A REASON.** Follow contest entry guidelines to the letter. If, for instance, contest rules require your name “on a cover sheet only” so that your submission will be judged anonymously, you will be disqualified if you ignore this. In addition, take note of how many copies to send. If you don’t send the correct amount, by the time you send more, it may be past the submission deadline. Plenty of contests require an entry fee, so if you’re going to pay to have your work judged, make sure you don’t waste your money because of failure to respect the rules.

**DON’T BE LATE.** Contest deadlines are very important. In the listings throughout this publication, we’ve included this information where possible. These contest deadlines were updated and confirmed at our press deadline, but things change, so be sure to write, call or look online for complete information. Also, know that if a contest requires you to mail in your entry and has a deadline of Feb. 1, that means the submission must be *postmarked* by that date.

**WHEN CONSIDERING THE ENTRY FEE, CONSIDER THE PRIZE.** Contests can be a hit on the wallet, so you obviously can’t enter every one. If you’re paying more to enter a competition, make sure the prize is worth it. Beware of contests that charge entry fees disproportionate to the amount of the prize. For example, contests offering a \$10 prize, but charging \$7 in entry fees, are a waste of your time and money.

**KNOW THAT THE TOUGHER THE COMPETITION, THE MORE PRESTIGIOUS THE VICTORY.** What’s more impressive: winning first place in the children’s writing category in a local writers conference contest, or winning a large contest that drew 2,500 entries? Certainly the latter. Larger competitions will have a crowded playing field, but coming out on top will be much more impressive than winning a smaller, regional contest.

**DO SOME RESEARCH.** Winning a contest or award can launch a successful writing career. Take a professional approach by doing a little extra research. Note the individuals who are serving as judges. Invest in

a sample copy of the publication in which the prize-winning article, poem or short story appeared. Attend the staged reading of an award-winning play. Your extra effort will be to your advantage in competing with writers who simply submit blindly.

**CHECK FOR UPDATES.** New contests and awards are announced nearly every day. However, many lose their funding or fold—and sponsoring magazines go out of business just as often, so always check their websites (if you can) before submitting. We have contacted the organizations whose contests are listed in these pages with the understanding that they are valid through 2010–2011. In almost all instances, contact names, entry fees and deadlines have been noted for your convenience.

**NOT EVERY CONTEST APPLIES TO EVERYONE.** When you peruse a set of guidelines, you will see that some contests are not applicable to all writers. The writer’s age, previous publication, geographic location and length of the work are common matters of eligibility. Read the requirements carefully to ensure you don’t enter a contest for which you are not qualified. The contests and awards listed in this publication are arranged by category (fiction, nonfiction, etc.). If you’re writing children’s books, for instance, you can turn immediately to page 53 and get started. 🏆

### **WHAT DOES IT MEAN FOR A WORK TO BE “PUBLISHED”?**

Plenty of contests in this publication are looking for new, “unpublished” submissions. This leads to the question: What does it mean for a piece to be published? First off, if anyone has ever paid you money to print the material or post it online, that would make it published. If you posted material on your blog with no financial compensation, this is a gray area. If you wanted to submit the work to a contest, I would recommend taking it down off the blog permanently, so it is not available in any medium at the time of submission.

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**CHUCK SAMBUCHINO** is the executive editor of *Get Your Book Published* and the editor of *Guide to Literary Agents* ([guidetoliteraryagents.com/blog](http://guidetoliteraryagents.com/blog)). His humor book, *How to Survive a Garden Gnome Attack* ([gnomeattack.com](http://gnomeattack.com)), was released in 2010.

# THE TRUTH ABOUT WRITING CONTESTS

*You can't win if you don't enter.  
But before you do, take a close look at what  
"winning" really means.*





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**T**he cash prizes. The chance to be published. The bragging rights over everyone who gives you that look when you say you're a writer.

There are plenty of good reasons to enter writing contests, but there are also plenty of reasons to be careful about the ones you choose. How do you know if a contest is worth its entry fee? How do you know if it's even a real contest?

Before you enter, protect yourself by answering these eight important questions.

**1. ARE THE SPONSORS ON THE UP-AND-UP?** Look for contests sponsored by nonprofit literary groups, established publications, reputable publishing houses, colleges and universities. Some small presses run contests simply to find books to publish. While this can be legitimate, be wary of any contests that have said in past years that they didn't find anything publishable—yet they kept the entry money. Annual contests should provide, either on their website or upon request, a list of past winners.

**2. HAVE YOU READ THE RULES CAREFULLY?** Make sure the contest rules clearly state the following: eligibility,

double-check all information to be sure it's up to date, especially if it came from a book or magazine.

**3. IS THE ENTRY FEE REASONABLE?** Most contests charge fees, usually ranging from \$5 to \$25. For one thing, it's time-consuming to administer a contest, but sponsors may also want to make a profit. No harm in that, but you must consider what you're potentially getting in exchange for what you're giving. It's not unheard of to see something like an entry fee of \$25 for a prize of \$50. Expect fees to be commensurate with the prize and how big the "names" are judging the contest.

**4. WHO'S DOING THE JUDGING?** Judges should be published writers, past contest winners, editors at publishing houses or representatives from known literary organizations. Sometimes sponsors won't release the judges' names, however, for privacy concerns. At a minimum, try to find out if the judges are professors at prestigious universities, authors published with recognized houses or the like. Another important element: Will the judges provide a critique? This can be arduous for the judges (said from personal experience) but highly beneficial

*... be wary of any contests that have said in past years that they didn't find anything publishable—yet they kept the entry money.*

format, fees, prizes, circumstances in which prizes will or won't be awarded, judging and what rights, if any, you're granting. Some competitions are for already published works, while others specify only unpublished writings. Is the deadline when entries must be postmarked or received? Are e-mailed entries accepted? Will the work be returned? Can you submit a work that's won or placed in other contests? (If so, that's a good way to wring more money or other perks from one good work.) Follow instructions. There will always be those who think the rules don't apply to them—but if that's you, your entry could be tossed before anyone even reads it. Finally,

to the often-solitary writer. Contests with constructive feedback are more often easily worth the entry fee.

**5. HAVE YOU PROTECTED YOUR RIGHTS?** Don't ever agree to give up the copyright to your work to enter a contest. For some competitions, if you win, you may have to license some of the rights—one-time publication rights, for example. But don't sign all your rights away.

I can't emphasize enough to read the fine print of the contest rules. Check if they're doing a sneaky rights-grab. For instance, there are some contests where the main prize is the publication of your book. One such contest's rules state that, though the winner keeps the copyright,

the sponsor takes an “irrevocable, exclusive, royalty-free, time-unlimited, and world-wide right to use the work in whole or part for any and all purposes related to the commercial exploitation of the work.” And this is if you win?

Also, some contest rules state that you “shall receive a standard sponsor author agreement” if you win the book contract, an agreement that might even set forth the advance and royalty rates. But you’d probably be better off simply submitting the work through regular channels, and then being able to negotiate your contract like you always should.

Finally, see if you can submit your work elsewhere while the contest is being finalized. If you can’t, it could tie up your work for months.

**6. DO YOU SUSPECT A SCAM?** In general, be wary of submitting to contests where your work is published only online (unless it’s a well-known website) or published only in an anthology that winners have to pay to receive. You may initially be excited to receive a letter saying your work has been selected to be included in a book, only to find you must buy a copy—preferably multiple copies—for your friends and family. In some cases, the “winners” could be everyone who enters the contest, and the sponsor makes money through selling the books to contest entrants.

Also beware of contests run by individuals who stand to profit from your work, such as book doctors, or literary agencies where the prize is representation but

### THE PROOF IS IN THE PAYOFF

Entering good contests can pay off in some interesting ways, even if you don’t win. For example:

**TEST MARKETING AND MENTORS:** Romance writer Ruth Kaufman says she enters contests to get her work in front of editors and agents who are judging. This way, she gets an idea of what they think of her work before formally submitting to them—in some cases, she’s even received requests for more material. As an unexpected benefit, she’s developed friendships with co-finalists and authors who’ve judged her work. She even found a mentor in one of her favorite authors.

**KICKSTARTS:** Other writers don’t enter contests necessarily to win, but to give themselves deadlines and a particular assignment. Pat Remick took on a “3-Day Novel” contest to make a substantial start on a murder mystery she’d been mulling over for a while.

**CREDENTIALS BOOSTER:** Mary Hutchings Reed, a novelist, enters contests to provide credentials for her cover letter. She enters the well-known contests on the “off-chance something good will happen.” But generally she finds that those that have several winners—five to 10 runners-up—provide better bang for her buck. She’s won one first prize in a “first chapter” contest and some honorable mentions in smaller contests. Mostly

what she’s gotten out of entering contests, she says, is “a lesson in perseverance.”

**STEPPING-STONE:** Weary met with four magazine editors in New York City upon winning the WD Annual Writing Competition. This led to an essay published in *Good Housekeeping*. She says that more than merely opening doors, however, winning “gave me the confidence to knock where I might not have otherwise knocked. As a consequence, one success led to another.” Also, Weary says an agent eager to see her work contacted her. This is a common occurrence for winners—agents pay close attention to the bigger contests for ripe pickings. Like Reed, Weary looks for contests that have more than one winner or those that provide a year’s subscription for the entry fee, so she can study the types of stories that are winning. With short stories, she says you’ll generally make more winning a contest than you would selling to a literary journal (of course, you do have to win). But it’s not about the money; “it’s about the validation.”

It helps to be pretty thick-skinned if you’re going to enter contests. But anyone who writes for more than pure personal satisfaction knows that rejection is part of the deal. As Remick says, “the creative experience is worth the risk.”

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with heavy “editing fees.” Stay away from contests that reserve the right to award prizes on a pro rata basis (where the prize amounts are determined by the number of entrants). These exist simply to make money for the organizer.

#### **7. DOES YOUR WORK SHOUT, “PICK ME! PICK ME!”?**

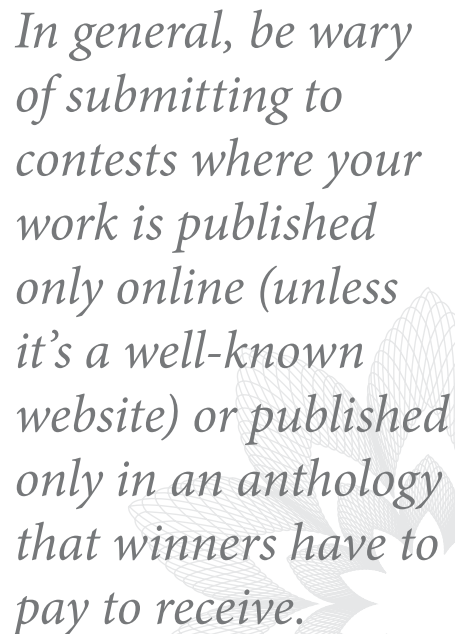
It’s easy for judges to discard the bad and the mediocre. Then they have their stack of “good.” Once you’re in the good pile, how do you make it to the top?

Just as you should read back issues of magazines you hope to write for, try to read previous winners’ work. Most contests list previous winners online. This way, you’ll know what the contest organizers seem to respond to. That’s not to say you should change your writing to make it similar to previous entries. But if the winners have a totally different style than yours, you may want to reconsider that contest altogether.

Any contest sponsor is looking for an original voice, solid writing and a good story. But if it’s a publishing house sponsoring the competition, salability matters most. They’re looking for commercial viability, quality of research and presentation, and media potential.

Julie Weary, the grand-prize winner of the Writer’s Digest Annual Writing Competition in 1997, now judges competitions and also continues to enter them. She says that the writer’s voice and “the ability to hook me right away” are what grab her when judging. “Weak openings and poor, predictable endings are a sure way to be knocked out of the running,” she adds.

When I judged a self-published books contest a few years ago, I discovered that looks do indeed count when narrowing down the choices. Presentation and appearance are extremely important. Whether you’re submitting a finished book or a short story, your package should be professional, clean and attractive. Don’t bribe contest officials; your work should stand on its own. No candy, baked goods or flowers (yes, this happens). No hand-written entries, no fancy fonts, no colored paper. Read your entry aloud from a hard copy before sending it in. You’ll be surprised at the typos and mistakes you’ll catch.



*In general, be wary of submitting to contests where your work is published only online (unless it’s a well-known website) or published only in an anthology that winners have to pay to receive.*

Don’t mistake these for minor details. If the judge likes your work, but it comes down to yours and another great entry that has excellent grammar and spelling, the professional work wins every time. As Weary says, “I know for a fact that if all things are equal, those missteps will mean the difference between success and failure.”

**8. WHAT DO YOU REALLY WIN?** Prizes, publication, publicity, just a simple pat on the back? Money is always welcome. But there are also prizes of publication (which, again, can be a mixed blessing, depending on whether you’re allowed to negotiate the contract), or having the opportunity to meet with agents or editors who can help your career. Prizes might also be products, like books or magazine subscriptions, or services such as publicity from an outside PR firm or manuscript editing. With these sorts of prizes, be sure the services are free to you and not some back-door way to get you to pay extra. Winning (or even placing in a contest that names runners-up) can generate invaluable publicity. 🏆



## POLISH YOUR WORK

*Before you start entering contests,  
get your writing in tip-top shape to  
better your chances.*





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Submitting your work without rewriting is like playing hockey naked. You're just not equipped to put your best, um, face on things. And sooner rather than later, a well-placed puck is going to hit you where it hurts most.

That puck is the judge's built-in prejudice against weak material. They are tuned to say *No*. After all, they need just one big winner. That's why you rewrite. You want to take out all those *No* reasons.

### CONDUCTING A FRESH READ

So you have a completed manuscript. This is a crucial time. What you must avoid is any temptation to stop and do wholesale revisions before you have read the entire manuscript once.

Think of this process as Google Earth. You want to get a complete overview of your "earth." Your story as a whole. You can spin the earth a little here and there to get a better view, but stay up top. You'll tag a few places to visit later, to zoom in on. That'll be the nuts and bolts of revision.

First, it's essential to give yourself a break from the first draft. During this "cooling phase," try to forget about it completely.

Then try to read the manuscript front-to-back in a couple of sittings. What you want to create is the feeling of being a fresh reader, getting into this story for the first time.

Don't stop to make changes at this point. You may jot a few things down—notes to yourself and the like—but keep going to get the overall impression of the story. Too many writers just sit down and read a manuscript page by page, making changes as they come up. Big or small, each item is dealt with the moment it's seen.

Much better is to go from large to small. To start with the most crucial aspects and work your way down to the final step, which is The Polish.

### MAKING BIG-PICTURE REVISIONS

When it comes to revision, I've found that most writers need a systematic approach. Think of this, then, as your ultimate revision checklist. Apply these questions to every manuscript you write.

---

### Character

- How can I make my Lead interesting and "jump off the page" more?
- Will readers bond to my Lead because he:
  - ... cares for someone other than himself?
  - ... is funny, irreverent or a rebel with a cause?
  - ... is competent at something?
  - ... is an underdog facing long odds without giving up?
  - ... has a dream or desire readers can relate to?
  - ... has undeserved misfortune, but doesn't whine about it?
  - ... is in jeopardy or danger?
- Do my characters sufficiently contrast? Are they interesting enough on their own?
- Is the opposition character just as fully realized as the Lead? Is he as strong or (preferably) stronger than the Lead, in terms of ability to win the fight?
- Is the opposition's behavior justified (at least in his own mind)?

---

### Plot

- Is there any point where a reader might feel like putting the manuscript down?
- Does the plot feel forced or unnatural?

---

### The Opening

- How do my opening pages so that they conform to Hitchcock's axiom ("A good story is life with the dull parts taken out")?
- What is the story world I'm trying to present?
- What is the tone of my story going to be? Are the descriptions consistent with that mood?
- What happens in Act I that's going to compel the reader to keep reading?
- Is there enough conflict in the setup to run through the whole story?

---

### The Middle

- Do I deepen character relationships?
- Why should the reader care what's happening?
- Have I justified the final battle or final choice that will wrap things up at the end?

## WHAT THE PROCESS LOOKS LIKE

Below are two versions of a section from my novel, *Sins of the Fathers*. The first is my original. The second shows a little of the thinking process that goes into self-editing.

### ORIGINAL VERSION

First came the children.

In Lindy's dream they were running and screaming, dozens of them, in some sunlit field. A billowing surge of terrified kids, boys and girls, some in baseball garb, others in variegated ragtag clothes that gave the impression of a Dickens novel run amok.

What was behind them, what was causing the terror, was something dark, unseen. In the hovering over visions that only dreams afford, Lindy sought desperately the source of the fear.

There was a black forest behind the field, like you'd see in fairy tales. Or nightmares.

She moved toward the forest, knowing who it was, who was in there, and she'd meet him coming out. It would be Darren DiCinni, and he would have a gun, and in the dream she kept low to avoid being shot herself.

Moving closer and closer now, the screams of the scattering children fading behind her. Without having to look behind she knew that a raft of cops was pulling up to the scene.

She wondered if she was going to warn DiCinni, or was she just going to look at him?

Would he say anything to her, or she to him?

The dark forest had the kind of trees that come alive at night, with gnarly arms and knotted trunks. It was the place where the bad things lived.

Lindy didn't want to go in, but she couldn't stop herself.

That's when the dark figure started to materialize, from deep within the forest, and he was running toward her.

### EDITED VERSION

First came the children.

In Lindy's dream they were running and screaming, dozens of them, in some sunlit field. A billowing surge of terrified kids, boys and girls, some in baseball garb, others in variegated ragtag clothes that gave the impression of a Dickens novel run amok.

~~What was behind them, what was causing the terror, was something dark, unseen.~~ [Weak sentence structure. Rethink. Check "dark." I use it a lot!] In the hovering over visions [Confusing.] that only dreams afford, Lindy sought desperately the source of the fear.

There was [Sentences starting with "There" are generally weak. Rethink.] a black forest behind the field, like you'd see [Using "you" in this way can be effective in some places, but overuse is not good. Rethink.] in fairy tales. Or nightmares.

She moved toward the forest, knowing who it was, who was in there, [Awkward.] and she'd meet him coming out. It would be Darren DiCinni, and he would have a gun, and in the dream she kept low to avoid being shot herself. [See if I can strengthen this dramatic image.]

Moving closer and closer now, the screams of the scattering children fading behind her. Without having to look behind she knew that a raft of cops was pulling up to the scene.

She wondered if she was going to warn DiCinni, or was she just going to look at him? [Tighten.]

Would he say anything to her, or she to him?

The dark forest had the kind of trees that come alive at night, with gnarly arms and knotted trunks. It was the place where the bad things lived. [Rethink. There's "dark" again.]

Lindy didn't want to go in, but she couldn't stop herself.

That's when [Unneeded verbiage.] the dark figure started to materialize, from deep within the forest, and he [How do we know it's a he?] was running toward her.

- 
- Is there a sense of death (physical, professional, or psychological) that overhangs?
  - Is there a strong adhesive keeping the characters together (such as moral or professional duty, physical location or other reasons characters can't just walk away)?

### The Ending

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- Are there loose threads left dangling?
- Do I give a feeling of resonance?
- Will the readers feel the way I want them to feel?

### Scenes

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- Is there conflict or tension in every scene?
- Do I establish a viewpoint character?
- If the scene is action, is the objective clear? If the scene is reaction, is the emotion clear?

### Voice, Style & Point of View

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- Are there sections where the style seems forced or stilted?
- Is the POV consistent in every scene? If writing in first person, can the character see and feel what it is I describe? If writing in third person, do I slip into the thoughts of other characters than the POV character in the scene? Do I describe something the character can't see or feel?

### Setting & Description

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- Have I brought my setting to life for the reader?
- Are my descriptions of places and people too generic and forgettable?
- Are my descriptions doing “double duty” by adding to the mood or tone?

### Dialogue

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- Can I put in non sequiturs, or answer a question with a question, and so on?
- Can I change some attributions—he said, she said—to action beats?
- Does my dialogue have conflict or tension, even between allies?

### Theme

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- Do I know what my theme is? Has a different theme emerged in the writing? Am I fighting it?
- Have I woven in thematic elements naturally, avoiding “the lecture”?

### POLISHING YOUR WORK

Now, before you send off the manuscript, give it one more going over. This won't take long, but it will add that extra sparkle that could make all the difference.

**OPENINGS.** Can you begin any of your scenes or sections a little further in? Does the opening grab, have a hint of conflict or action? Do most of your scenes begin the same way? If so, vary them.

**ENDINGS.** See if you can find a place to end a scene earlier. How does it feel? It may be better, it may not. If it is, use it.

**DIALOGUE.** Is there “white space” in your exchanges? Can you cut any words to make the dialogue tighter?

**WORD SEARCH.** Do a word search for those repeated words and phrases you tend to overuse. Then modify them accordingly.

In addition, look for:

- *Very.* Cut it.
- *Suddenly.* Again, not needed.
- *Adverbs.* Cut them unless absolutely necessary.

### BEING YOUR OWN BEST EDITOR

Self-editing is the ability to know what makes fiction work. You learn to be your own guide so you may, as Renni Browne and Dave King put it in *Self-Editing for Fiction Writers*: “See your manuscript the way an editor might see it—to do for yourself what a publishing house editor once might have done.”

By self-editing and revising your work, you'll be operating on all cylinders. This is how you become a real writer. Cutting, shaping, adding, subtracting, working it, making it better, that's what real writing is all about. This is how unpublished writers become published. 🍷

# BEST ~IN~ SHOW

*Judges give advice  
on winning a  
screenwriting contest.*



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Screenwriting contests, they are a-changin'. Used to be, there were only a handful of different contests, and winning one scored you a small title and a smaller check, but little else for your trouble. Used to be, only story editors and junior executives or their assistants judged most contests, bringing with them limited expertise or interest in the outcome. Used to be, only dramatic or indie screenplays had any chance of winning the final grand prize. But I've got some good news for writers out there.

Times, they have a-changed.

While there are still a suspiciously high number of contests that are, at best, unhelpful to a writer and, at worst, shameless scams, in the past decade, a dynamic range of industry-minded and increasingly powerful contests have emerged. It's the golden era of screenwriting competitions and there's never been a better time to submit your scripts to (carefully researched) contests and reap the rewards.

One indicator that things have changed in the contest world is that the iron-fisted rulership of the family drama/coming-of-age/historical biography has ended. Now, any and every genre has a shot at taking the top slot. Why? Because contest-winning screenplays are no longer just calling cards to the industry. They are commercial enterprises that get attention and sometimes even get made.

Once the best-kept secret in town, screenwriting contests are now fertile ground for high-stakes competition, with future power-scribes duking it out for real-money prizes and that crucial all-access industry pass. As a competitor, it's more important than ever to submit only your best work. What does it take to win or place in a contest? What exactly do contest judges look for? What excites them? What turns them off? What's a guaranteed pass? We've lined up a panel of contest judge superstars to find out—and they should know.

Screenwriting contests our panel has judged include: Scriptalooza, Final Draft Big Break, PAGE International Screenwriting, Hollywood Outreach Program, tracking.com, CINE Screenwriting Awards, BlueCat and ScriptShark.

## FORMAT

"I can tell in the first 10 pages if a script is not going to move on. A big giveaway is the formatting," says Chris Sablan, an agent at Original Artists.

Screenwriting format involves very particular margins, plus devices like transitions, parentheticals and capitalizations to help explain the action. Mastering this format is the first crucial step to escaping the first-round cuts. "If the screenplay is poorly paginated or filled with typos, that's a sure sign of a nonprofessional script," says Caren Bohrman of The Bohrman Agency.

If the ultimate goal is to convince your readers that you're a professional-level writer waiting to be discovered, then proper formatting goes without saying. If you're uncertain about the format in your script, consider purchasing screenwriting software such as Final Draft or Movie Magic.

## NARRATIVE

A properly written screenplay isn't just about knowing how to center the dialogue, or how to write a slugline. It's about narrative, as well. Narrative—or scene description—is the action of the screenplay; it tells us exactly what's happening on the screen. It is also the second most obvious indicator of a weak writer. "In scene description, remember to tell us only what is absolutely necessary to understand what's going on," says script doctor and screenwriter Lance Thompson. "Leave flowery description to prose writers."

Sablan couldn't agree more: "Writers think that by writing long and beautiful descriptions, that's going to make the script better. Maybe for books, but not for screenplays. The less, the better. Readers tend to focus on dialogue and will scan through description."

The "rule" in screenwriting is that every page should be two-thirds white space. That means your narrative must be streamlined and brief, making room for plenty of dialogue. Once your script "looks" right and you're promoted to the second round, your story can really shine—or raise more red flags.

Also, if the action is overwritten—for example, too much description, citing things that can't be filmed or inserting camera directions—that's a good tipoff that the writer hasn't developed their craft to the

professional level yet,” says Bill Lundy, chairman emeritus of the Scriptwriters Network.

## STRUCTURE

A winning script at the Scriptwriters Network’s Hollywood Outreach Program is going to have “a compelling, well-structured story with interesting twists and turns,” says Lundy. Judges want surprises; a predictable or derivative story is another reason to pass. Structure is about more than just three well-placed acts. It’s the spine, and controls many of the crucial craft aspects of a script, such as the pacing and tone of your plot, and the interweaving of your story and character arcs.

“I think studying the technique of writing a screenplay is very important, and it’s easy to see when one of those elements is off. With a properly structured screenplay, many of the other elements will fall into place, and be a much better read,” says Eric Williams, president of Zero Gravity Management.

Not sure how to crack this complex concept? Examine your story in outline form, then consider these three questions from Thompson:

- Does the story move forcefully toward a well-drawn conclusion, or does it meander and take too many detours?
- Does the character have a clear goal?
- Does the conclusion of the story tell us not only whether the main character attained his goal, but also give us a deeper insight into the character?

## CHARACTERS

There is as much riding on your characters as on your story, if not more. If a judge can’t relate to your characters, she will fall out of your story—and halt its rise beyond the second round.

“Do I like and care about the characters? Do I feel like I am going on a journey that makes them better people by the end? How do they relate to the other characters and how do they help each other grow?” These are the questions Kat Blasband, director of development at Tapestry Films, asks — plus one last one that might surprise contest entrants: “Is the character castable?”

According to Williams, unique, sharp characters attract cast. Actors look for interesting roles to play, so it’s imperative that the characters and their dialogue stand out.

Again, the goal of a winning script is to secure representation and/or to sell; why not write characters that attract great actors that help you in that task? But before you start reworking your hero just for Will Smith, keep in mind that great screenwriting means creating characters that work within your story.

Focus on some basic goals: Create a character that is someone we haven’t seen before, and have him or her drive the action, so they’re not merely reacting to events and circumstances.

“If the characters are not properly set up, the story won’t move on. But if I find myself thinking about the characters once I’ve put the script down, that’s a pretty sure bet the script is alive and something I’d like to take to the big screen,” says Bohrman, who has found clients through the contests she judges, which include [trackingb.com](http://trackingb.com) and the CINE Awards.

## DIALOGUE

“I read scripts all year round and I can instantly tell if someone can write. One of the most important things is writing dialogue that when you read it, it feels natural,” says Mark Andrushko, co-founder of Scriptapalooza.

What makes for great dialogue? Thompson says it should be “lean—not full of exposition or chit-chat.” Lundy says to work for “dialogue that incorporates subtext and feels ‘real’ in the world of the story. Avoid precise, overwrought or on-the-nose dialogue.”

Blasband cites an even more delicate feat: “I love when after I’ve read a couple pages of a script, I no longer have to look to see which character is speaking. I just know it, because the characters each have their own distinct personalities in the dialogue.”

## CONCEPT

Okay, so you’ve blasted through the first round by being a master of the screenwriting basics like format and narrative. The second round proved no challenge to your serious skills with structure, character and dialogue. Congratulations—your script has

made it to the quarter or semifinals! But is it a winner? This is the place where good scripts stop, but great scripts continue on for consideration of that elusive finalist or semi-finalist status.

It's as simple as this: If the script is well written and it's commercial, it just might win.

"I've read so many scripts that have a great idea and terrible execution or incredible writing on a script that could never be made into a movie. It needs to be a great idea," says Blasband, but "it also needs to be clean, preferably high concept, original and commercial story that people can wrap their minds around quickly."

This emphasis on commerciality might catch contest writers off guard, but it's a theme that came up repeatedly with our judges. This is a new twist in a game where the tent-pole picture or high concept film once had little traction against the coming of age or family drama. Not every contest has shifted gears to be more competitive in Hollywood, but knowing whether the contest you're submitting to has this objective tells you if you've targeted the right contest for your script.

In other words, having a "winning concept" is a matter of perspective. Check out a contest's winners over the last five years. If the scripts are all high concept, then know that this is the place for your globe-trotting bio-hazard thriller. If the winners were all gentle dramas, then you've found the best possible arena for your father-and-son-separated-at-birth story.

But, admittedly, every winning script needs to be more than the sum of its parts; it needs to be just a little bit magic.

With so much to gain as an entrant, there's no reason not to find the right contest for your script and take your shot at breakout success. But before you press the send button on the submission page, take these judges' advice. Knowing what they look for will help you write your best possible screenplay, and sidestep some of the obstacles to winning. They're waiting for you, and they don't just want to give you a trophy and a few dollars; they want to help start your career. Just make sure your work is polished and ready. 🏆

## WINNING SCRIPTS

I asked contest judges to share their candid thoughts on what separates the best of the best from the rest of the pack. It isn't easy for a contest judge to articulate exactly what tickles their fancy from one story to the next, but here's what they had to say:

"You need to hook your reader in the first 10 pages. You have to have a great story and great characters. Here is an easy explanation: If a script is a comedy, it should make me laugh. If it's a horror, it should make me scared. And if it's a thriller, it should make me tense."

—Sablan

"The script I remember most had a main character who was torn between her greed and her native religion, but greed won out. The plot imaginatively supported this dilemma. The action was fast and the suspense built steadily. Every word of dialogue and description was necessary to the story—there was nothing wasted. This script was polished, professional and ready to shoot."

—Thompson

"This year's winner was a writer who knew his craft and was ready for the big leagues. Each winner in the Scriptwriter's Network 20-year contest history has secured representation."

—Lundy

"Last year I found a script I was still thinking about three days later. The writing and dialogue were exceptional. The lead character jumped off the page and was easily relatable. I've gone back and read the screenplay maybe ten times."

—Williams

"I always say great writing floats to the top. Right from the start, you can tell the winning writer can write but it's more than that. It's the storytelling, the way he writes. You can't put it down."

—Andrushko

**TRAI CARTWRIGHT** (craftwrite.com) has judged more than a dozen screenplay contests; she is a writing consultant, film and theater producer, and newly minted MFA student.





## FIRST PLACE

*Meet former contest winners and learn from their stories and paths to success.*



When your piece lines up next to hundreds of others, what will make it stand out? What does it take to win?

To answer that question, we invite you to meet five winning authors for WD's largest competitions—for poetry, popular fiction, short stories, self-published books, and more. Just like you, these authors faced entry numbers ranging from 1,000 to 13,500, and without the help of any intervening deities or convenient fairy godmothers, their stories, articles and poems shone through the slush pile.

So how did they do it? On the following pages, these winning authors share some key tips that you can utilize to put yourself at the top, too.

Discover what made Karin Bradberry's poem "Javelina" appeal to poetry expert Robert Lee Brewer; after that,

get a behind the scenes look at how Benjamin Kowalsky used rhythm and pace to engage the judges in his popular fiction story winner, "Yusov Assembles a Rifle." Need help with translating the soul of your work onto paper? Uncover how passion and experience helped John Moir craft his feature article, "Condors in a Coal Mine," to combine true fact with fiction-like narrative. And don't pass up a look at how Wendi Christner packed her dynamic voice and unique perspective into fewer than 1,500 words to win WD's short story contest.

It isn't everyday that winners of writing contests big and small sit down to talk about their journey and pass along advice at the same time. So enjoy these tales of winners across genres and styles. And who knows—next year you might find yourself among them!

## THE WRITER'S DIGEST 5TH ANNUAL POETRY AWARDS

BY ZACHARY PETIT

Out of about 3,350 limericks, acrostics and everything in between, **KARIN BRADBERRY's** "Javelina" took first place in the Writer's Digest 5th Annual Poetry Awards, laying claim to \$500 and a copy of the 2010 *Poet's Market*. *Writer's Market* editor and Poetic Asides blogger Robert Lee Brewer selected the grand-prize entry from among the finalists.

"I loved 'Javelina' for a few reasons," he says. "'Javelina' is a villanelle, but it's a loose villanelle, which allows the poet to work within an established form but not be confined by the form. At the same time, this poem paints a picture of a family enjoying a day in nature in a way nature intended."

The contest was open to poems of any style that were original, unpublished and 32 lines or fewer. The top 50 entries will be printed in a special collection, available for \$11.95 at [bit.ly/9F0sfH](http://bit.ly/9F0sfH). To find out how to enter the next competition, visit [writersdigest.com/poetryawards](http://writersdigest.com/poetryawards).

### THE TOP 10 WINNERS

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| 1. "Javelina"<br>BY KARIN BRADBERRY                   | 6. "The Veil"<br>BY IRIS LEE UNDERWOOD         |
| 2. "On Silver Street"<br>BY LOUIS WILSON              | 7. "Sevenling: Deployed"<br>BY SUELLEN WEDMORE |
| 3. "Inside the New Mall"<br>BY KELLY FINEMAN          | 8. "Savannah"<br>BY DAWN CULVERWELL            |
| 4. "Rosary Beads and Tarot Cards"<br>BY MARCIA BROOKS | 9. "Tethered"<br>BY JULIE A. PIERCE            |
| 5. "Simonetta's Pearls"<br>BY IRIS LEE UNDERWOOD      | 10. "Poppies"<br>BY MELISSA GOODWIN            |

### JAVELINA

We nestled under the willows  
on a sunny December day  
like a family of javelina.

Walking upriver, we'd inspected  
beaver dams.  
Amazed by their industry, then sated  
by lunch,  
we nestled under the willows.

We'd shuffled through the dusty leaves,  
seeking a suitable spot to lie down  
like a family of javelina.

Watching a crested kingfisher  
on the banks of the Gila River,  
we nestled under the willows.

Overcome by the quiet warmth,  
we fell into gentle snores  
like a herd of javelina.

No boundaries between us,  
Three sisters, a mate and a son,  
we nestled under the willows  
like a family of javelina.

—Karin Bradberry

## THE WRITER'S DIGEST POPULAR FICTION AWARDS

*This winner assembled a powerful thriller—one piece at a time.*

BY MELISSA HILL

A young assassin poses as the protégé of her target, slowly deceiving him to get close enough to make the kill. Meanwhile, piece by piece, her mark builds a sniper rifle and prepares to carry out a hit of his own. As the clock ticks, Benjamin Kowalsky's short story isolates two enemies in the Russian Revolution above a crowded theater and uses the methodical rhythm of weapon assembly to set the pace and tone.

"An assembly manual is logical. It's purposeful," Kowalsky says. "If you follow all the steps, it leads you inexorably to a particular conclusion."

And thus in "Yusov Assembles a Rifle," he steers the reader one boot-clad footstep at a time to a thrilling end.

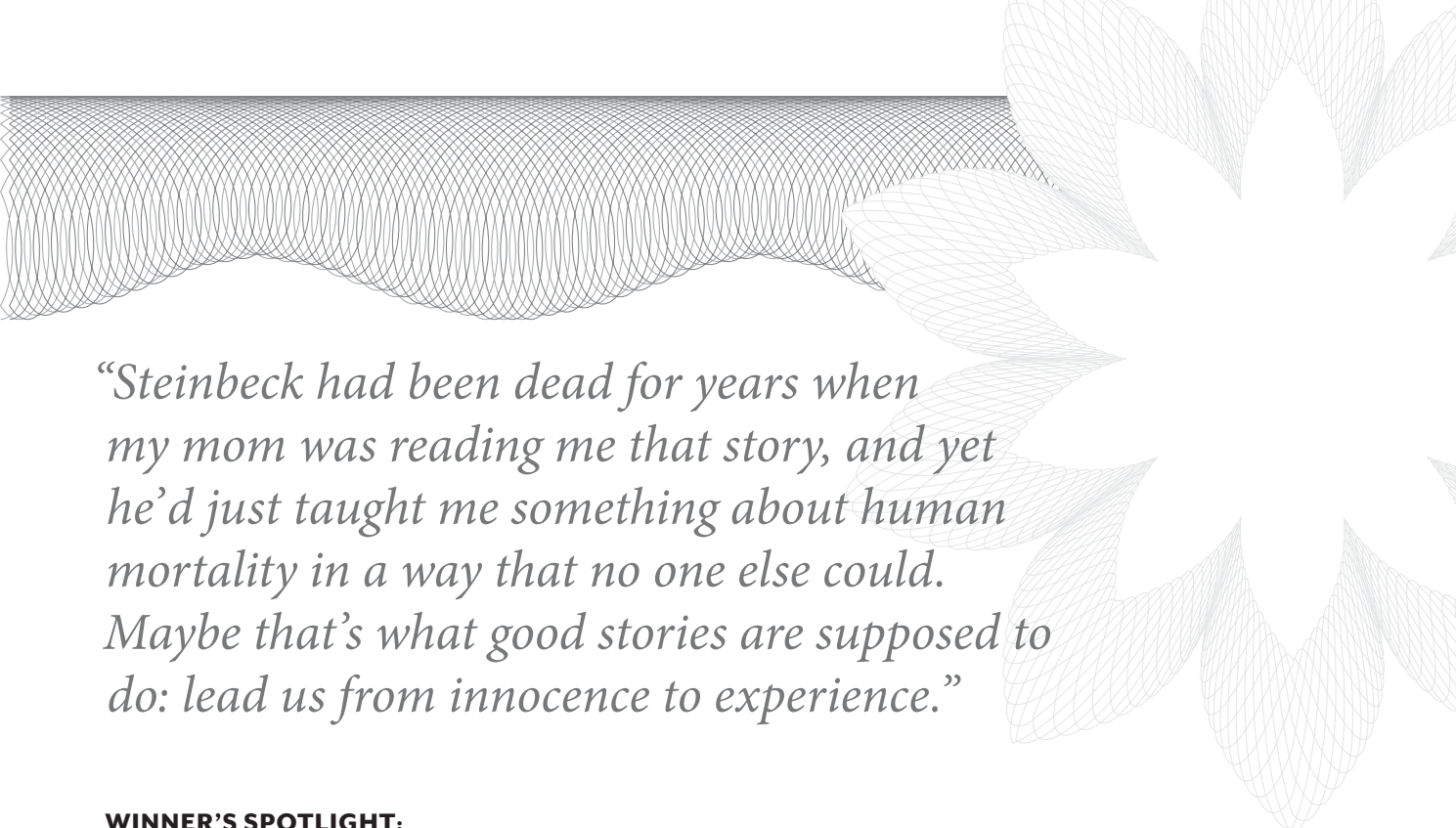
While people normally associate rhythm with music or poetry, writers know that stories have it, too—rhythm that moves the reader from beginning to middle to end, rhythm that builds and eases tension, rhythm that carefully crafts tone. It's this rhythm that shapes the best thrillers, and it's this rhythm that helped earn Kowalsky's piece the grand prize in the Writer's Digest Popular Fiction Awards, out of more than 1,000 entries in five categories. For taking home top honors, Kowalsky will claimed \$2,500, \$100 worth of WD books and the 2010 *Novel & Short Story Writer's Market*.



The part-time writer from Boulder, Colo., used his rhythmic plot to set the beat for conflict-ridden characters with rich backgrounds. "I really wanted to play with people's sympathies," he says. "I don't like stories where you're given the good guy and you're just supposed to root for him. People are so much more complex than that."

Apart from his short fiction, Kowalsky dabbles in scriptwriting and aspires to become a lawyer—though he says he probably couldn't ever stop writing, even if he tried.

To read his winning story and an expanded Q&A, visit [WritersDigest.com/article/popfiction-10](http://WritersDigest.com/article/popfiction-10).



*“Steinbeck had been dead for years when my mom was reading me that story, and yet he’d just taught me something about human mortality in a way that no one else could. Maybe that’s what good stories are supposed to do: lead us from innocence to experience.”*

**WINNER’S SPOTLIGHT:**

**BENJAMIN KOWALSKY, Boulder, Colo.**

**ON INSPIRATION:** I have this memory of my mother reading me “The Red Pony” by John Steinbeck. I remember becoming so upset during the part where this red pony dies and her bones are bleaching in the sun. And then I thought about my mom and how she was going to die, too. ... It’s moments like that which inspired me to write. Steinbeck had been dead for years when my mom was reading me that story, and yet he’d just taught me something about human mortality in a way that no one else could. Maybe that’s what good stories are supposed to do: lead us from innocence to experience.

**ON RESEARCH:** The purpose of researching anything is to gain confidence about what I’m saying. It’s so that I know what I’m talking about to the finest possible details—and then I’ll tell the reader about 5 percent of what I know.

**ON GENRE:** I try not to pick a genre before writing. After writing, I try to figure out what the story is. I’ve ended up doing things like fantasy, historical fiction, experimental fiction and some erotica, too. (Though whenever I’m writing erotica I always get giggly and I can never finish.) For me, genre is an afterthought.

Does that sound pretentious? I always think that what I’m doing is literary fiction while I’m doing it. Now *that* sounds pretentious.

**ON STRUGGLES:** Besides just the practical aspect of writing on a consistent basis, one of the things that I’ve struggled with—that I think I’ve nearly overcome—is the emotional distance I’ve tried to put between myself and my stories. A friend of mine used to say that I was like a poker player who never showed his hand. It was cheap of me. I would keep on raising stakes, but I would never bring anything to a conclusion. I was just bluffing the whole time, and didn’t satisfy the reader in any sort of way. That’s been slowly improving. I think “Yusov” is a good example of me trying to write my way out of that problem.

**ON GETTING WRITING IDEAS:** I steal ideas and phrases from my friends. I steal their outfits and their faces. Or I steal something that happened between us and I put it in there. I steal from the family treasure mine of stories and I use them. ... This whole answer I’m giving you? I stole that from a professor I had in Creative Writing 101. But that’s nothing new. I’m a total thief. I think most people who write are like that.



Enter your story (4,000 words or fewer) in the sixth annual Writer’s Digest Popular Fiction Awards contest. Categories are horror, science fiction/fantasy, mystery/crime, thriller/suspense and romance. For more information, visit [WritersDigest.com/popularfictionawards](http://WritersDigest.com/popularfictionawards).





## 78TH ANNUAL WRITER'S DIGEST WRITING COMPETITION

*Grand-prize winner John Moir's love for the environment turned into a smart move for his writing career.*

BY SCOTT FRANCIS

Several years ago, while watching a group of circling condors during a trip to the Big Sur coastline, John Moir became intrigued by the endangered birds and felt compelled to write a series of newspaper articles about their plight. In 2004, *Birding* magazine asked him to write a feature story on the condor recovery program, and he was hooked. He went on to devote a large portion of his writing career to the subject—and it's paid off in more ways than one.

Moir's feature article "Condors in a Coal Mine"—originally published on Smithsonian.com—beat out more than 13,500 entries across 10 categories to win the grand prize in the 78th Annual Writer's Digest Writing Competition. The piece chronicles the dangers to condors from eating area wildlife killed or injured by hunters' lead ammunition, as well as the political battle in California to ban lead bullets, and the potential hidden threat to humans from the ammunition. His engrossing narrative begins with characters befitting a work of fiction and draws the reader into the real-life drama surrounding the birds. Moir has a gift for storytelling that conveys a true sense of the setting and scope of his tale.

"My earliest memories are of stories—hearing them, reading them, creating them," he says. "I have always been partial to books about nature and loved authors such as Ernest Thompson Seton, Colin Fletcher and John Steinbeck."

Moir has worked as a newspaper reporter, teacher and freelance journalist, and his current part-time position as a staff writer for the National Science Teachers Association allows him time to work on other writing projects. During the past few years he has been able to

focus more and more on material that combines his journalism background with his love of nature. He now mainly writes narrative nonfiction about science and environmental issues.

Moir has won numerous writing awards and is the author of *Return of the Condor: The Race to Save Our Largest Bird From Extinction* and *Just in Case: Disaster Preparedness and Emergency Self Help*. Learn more at [returnofthecondor.com](http://returnofthecondor.com).

### WINNER'S SPOTLIGHT:

**JOHN MOIR, Santa Cruz, Calif.**

#### WHAT MAKES FOR A SUCCESSFUL FEATURE ARTICLE?

A feature article isn't much different from any other type of writing. It comes down to captivating readers beginning with the first word and keeping that momentum going right through to the end of the story. That happens best with compelling characters and an engaging narrative.

#### HAVE YOU ALWAYS FOCUSED ON WRITING NONFICTION, OR DO YOU EXPLORE OTHER GENRES?

About the only genre I haven't attempted to write is screenplay. The diversity of my writing experience has been helpful in honing my craft, and my narrative nonfiction work draws heavily on my background writing fiction and poetry.

In recent years, I've focused more and more on narrative nonfiction. I love being able to take real events and use fiction techniques to bring a story alive for readers.

#### WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO OTHER WRITERS?

Be persistent. Keep improving your craft. Have faith that everything will work out even when clouds darken the horizon.

Love your work. Keep coming back to your writing chair.



The winner of this contest gets \$3,000 and a trip to New York City to meet with editors and agents. Want to throw your hat in the ring and enter this year's contest? Visit [WritersDigest.com/competitions](http://WritersDigest.com/competitions).



## 10TH ANNUAL WRITER'S DIGEST SHORT SHORT STORY COMPETITION

*The latest winner of WD's short short story competition proves that even confined spaces can hold the most powerful of messages.*

BY ZACHARY PETIT

**F**irst, you have to recreate the sea. To do that, you can take some putty and craft a few frothy waves, but that doesn't mean it's easy: You have to do it all through the opening of a bottle. And it only gets harder from there. You have to build the ship, tediously crafting every piece to scale. Cut. Sand. Shellac. Thread wire and string, and so on, until finally you have a jumbled little pile that you carefully—*carefully*—wedge into the opening of the bottle.

Then, if you did everything right, you can pull the thread and, mysteriously, almost magically, it happens: A sea vessel emerges from the wreckage.

All that cutting, planning, dedication and piecemeal perfection—even though she's never tried to build a ship in a bottle, Wendi Christner imagines it's a lot like writing the shortest of stories.

"I like the challenge of trying to fit all the story pieces into only a few words," Christner says.

In that challenge, she succeeded: As the grand-prize winner of the 10th Annual Writer's Digest Short Short Story Competition, judges selected her piece "Throwing Stones"—"the story of a young grieving mother who lets go of her deceased child the only way she can"—from 8,050 entries for its descriptive style, original voice and tight Southern narrative. And, of course, the full-time writer and Florida native pulled off the winning tale in fewer than 1,500 words, flash-fiction style.

As legend William Faulkner said concerning the discipline of writing short, "Almost every word has got to be almost exactly right. In the novel you can be careless but in the short story you can't."

In other words, ships aside, putting a message in a bottle is no small feat, either.

### WINNER'S SPOTLIGHT:

**WENDI CHRISTNER, Tampa, Fla.**

**LIFE STORY IN BRIEF:** I grew up in the north Florida Pan-handle near the Gulf Coast. My rural and coastal roots influence every part of my life and my writing. I'm sort of the female Kenny Chesney, minus the guitar, voice and fame.

**WRITING HISTORY:** I decided to make writing my career about five years ago, but I've been writing for as long as I can remember. I think my parents still have the only copy of "My Marvelous Mammal, Tut," circa fourth grade.

**PUBLICATIONS:** My novel *The Water Bearer* is published with BookStrand, and I regularly write erotic romance as Wendi Darlin.

**INSPIRATION FOR THE WINNING ENTRY:** There's a line in the story: "Hold it between the ditches." My grandma, who never learned to drive, used to say those words every time she got in a car. That memory somehow evoked a vision of [my protagonist] riding along, looking for her baby near the riverbank. The magic that sparks a story from a random memory or observation is a great mystery to me, but I love to be a part of the process.

**STYLE:** My style has a Southern twist, and with that usually comes some grit. Even my lighter pieces tend to contain elements that rub a little against the senses.

**ON SHORT-STORY SUCCESS:** I think the secret to a great story of any length is to engage the reader's emotions.

**HOW TO CAPTIVATE A READER WITH THE FORM:** I try to start strong and let every word carry its weight, even more so than in a novel. Scenes have to make their point quickly.

Enter your bold, brilliant and brief fiction (1,500 words or fewer) in the 11th Annual Writer's Digest Short Short Story Competition. For more information, or to enter online, visit [WritersDigest.com/short](http://WritersDigest.com/short).

## 17TH ANNUAL WRITER'S DIGEST INTERNATIONAL SELF-PUBLISHED BOOK AWARDS

*Daryl Pinksen took matters into his own hands to bring a controversial book to a niche market—and earned top honors in WD's self-published book competition.*

BY ZACHARY PETIT

In some circles of the literary world, doubting that Shakespeare wrote his plays can be downright blasphemous—and, as Daryl Pinksen learned, hard to publish.

When he submitted proposals for *Marlowe's Ghost: The Blacklisting of the Man Who Was Shakespeare*—a compelling book presenting a case that playwright Christopher Marlowe authored Shakespeare's works after faking his own death—Pinksen got, well, rejected. Agents liked the project, but believed he lacked the platform necessary to make it marketable. He had a master's in science education and degrees in physics and English lit, but no Ph.D. No previous publications. No ready-made following. No celebrity endorsements. Moreover, Pinksen believed the material was too unorthodox for university presses, and his audience too widely scattered for small publishing houses.

So, the Newfoundland, Canada, researcher and educator decided to move forward on his own.

“The best option, I felt, was to self-publish using print-on-demand technology, and *then* try to get the book, and myself, noticed,” he says.

Pinksen did just that through iUniverse—and took home \$3,000 and other prizes for beating out 2,600 entries in the 17th Annual Writer's Digest International Self-Published Book Awards. His book was selected for its solid writing, functional design

and the fascinating, careful case he builds for his premise. As competition judge and author Anthony Flacco notes, “Whether or not one accepts Pinksen's position that Christopher Marlowe was actually William Shakespeare, his arguments are precise, thorough and compelling.”

The subject originally drew Pinksen's interest after he saw the documentary *Much Ado About Something* on PBS' “Frontline.” Seduced by the drama of the story, Pinksen wrote a paper on Shakespearean scholarship while working toward his master's degree, and later expanded his research into a 10,000-word exit paper. But by then, he couldn't stop. After he graduated, the work continued to bloom.

“This book was unplanned,” he says. “It happened spontaneously, driven by my own curiosity.”

Pinksen went on to spend an estimated 3,000 hours researching, writing, rewriting and editing. After making the decision to self-publish, he devoted another six months to working with iUniverse to perfect and polish the manuscript.

While he says the project has been a labor of love, he believes it has the potential to find its audience, and hopes *Marlowe's Ghost* will create an opportunity for him to write other books.

“This is the greatest story that no one has ever heard of,” he says. “Given the chance to hear about it, I think many people will agree.”



## WINNER'S SPOTLIGHT:

**DARYL PINKSEN**, *Newfoundland, Canada*

### 5 TIPS FOR SELF-PUB SUCCESS

**1. CHOOSE A PUBLISHING PARTNER WISELY.** You get what you pay for. Sure, you can get your book printed for a low, low price, but not if you want it done right.

**2. INVEST IN YOUR BOOK.** When I submitted my manuscript to iUniverse, I thought it was in near-pristine condition. It was sent back to me with thousands of recommended grammatical changes. I was mortified, but my editor reassured me it really wasn't that bad.

Additional rounds [of editing] cost money. Indexing costs money. Competent interior and cover design costs money. If you want your book to meet industry standards, you have to pay to get it to that condition.

**3. TRUST THE PROCESS.** This one is tough: Once you decide to place your trust in a self-publishing company, you have to trust them. Listen to the advice, swallow your pride and take full advantage of the expertise that you are paying for. You will retain control and make the final decision at all times, which means you can ignore their recommendations



if you wish. Try to remember that while you know your book, they know the industry.

**4. FOCUS ON THE POSITIVES.** Print-on-demand makes sense. There are no risky and expensive print runs piled in boxes, lying in warehouses. You have total control. You retain all rights. All the decisions are yours.

If traditional publishers look ahead, they will study the business practices of self-publishers. They are efficient, sleek and nimble. Traditional publishers are going to get left behind if they don't cater to the needs of a wired generation of writers.

**5. BE PREPARED.** If you're planning to self-publish, beware: Newspapers and magazines will not review your book. Bookstores will not stock it. It's pointless to bemoan this practice. If you do self-publish, accept it and take steps to get yourself noticed in spite of it. Understand that self-publishing is a gamble, and the odds of turning a profit are against you. 🏆



Enter your self-published book in this year's contest and be the next breakout success story. For more information, visit [WritersDigest.com/competitions](http://WritersDigest.com/competitions).

# WIN ~a~ BOOK DEAL

*These 24 contests reward their winners  
with a juicy prize: a book contract.*

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**W**hether you write fiction, poetry or nonfiction, if you're serious about getting a book published, you're probably already querying agents and publishers—or in the stages of preparing to. But you may not know there are other routes to publication.

Contests for book-length works are a way to test your skills as a writer—and maybe even get published by a small press. While there's no guarantee you'll win, there are lots of reasons to try. Besides publication and prize money, winning or placing in a book contest can provide a nice addition to your author credentials, help you get your foot in the door with an agent, build your author platform (winners often are invited to do readings or give lectures at universities) and otherwise give your writing career that crucial boost it needs to gain momentum. Plus, the guidelines of these contests say they often offer contracts to other finalists, as well.

Most of these contests are sponsored by a university press, an academic institution, or an established literary publisher or journal. New writers need not be shy about entering—in fact, many of these contests are *intended* to be a way to search out fresh talent. They're open to all submissions that follow their guidelines, but keep in mind you'll most likely be required to pay an entry fee.

Remember, before you ever submit to any contest:

- As with traditional submissions, competition is fierce, so enter only your best work. You'll need a complete manuscript—and first drafts are probably just a waste of your entry fee. Submit only revised, polished work you'd be proud to publish.
- Make sure the publisher sponsoring or partnering with the contest is reputable (as those listed here are). Also be sure it's in line with your goals. If you have your heart set on a big New York City publisher, don't enter a contest that would publish your book on a smaller scale.
- Be wary of unusually high entry fees.
- Make sure to find out what kind of rights the publisher acquires from the winner (e.g., first-time publication rights are standard).
- Research any royalty packages that are part of the winnings to make sure you'd be amenable to the terms.

Just as you would when evaluating a potential agent or market, do your research to be sure each contest is

a good fit for you, your writing and your goals. This roundup of 24 contests is a great place to start—and, of course, you can find others by searching online or consulting a resource like [WritersMarket.com](http://WritersMarket.com). Who knows? One of them could be that creative route to publication you've been looking for. Good luck!

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## FICTION

### **AWP AWARD SERIES IN THE NOVEL**

**GUIDELINES:** Considers manuscripts of at least 60,000 words. **ENTRY FEE:** \$10 for members of The Association of Writers & Writing Programs; \$25 for nonmembers. **PRIZE:** \$2,000 and book publication by New Issues Press. **DEADLINE:** Feb. 28. **LEARN MORE:** [awpwriter.org/contests/series.htm](http://awpwriter.org/contests/series.htm)

### **THE BELLWETHER PRIZE FOR FICTION**

**GUIDELINES:** Considers novel manuscripts of at least 80,000 words; author must have record of at least four published pieces. **ENTRY FEE:** \$25. **PRIZE:** \$25,000 and book publication by designated publisher (in 2009, Algonquin Books). **DEADLINE:** Not yet announced; check website for the latest info. **LEARN MORE:** [bellwetherprize.org/appl.html](http://bellwetherprize.org/appl.html)

### **THE GRACE PALEY PRIZE IN SHORT FICTION**

**GUIDELINES:** Considers manuscripts of 150–300 pages. **ENTRY FEE:** \$10 for AWP members; \$25 for nonmembers. **PRIZE:** \$4,000 and book publication by the University of Massachusetts Press. **DEADLINE:** Feb. 28. **LEARN MORE:** [awpwriter.org/contests/series.htm](http://awpwriter.org/contests/series.htm)

### **THE IOWA SHORT FICTION AWARD**

**GUIDELINES:** Considers manuscripts of at least 150 pages; entries must be unpublished as a collection, but individual stories may have been previously published. **ENTRY FEE:** None. **PRIZE:** Book publication by the University of Iowa Press. **DEADLINE:** Manuscripts received Aug. 1–Sept. 30 each calendar year are considered. **LEARN MORE:** [uiowapress.org/authors/iowa-short-fiction.htm](http://uiowapress.org/authors/iowa-short-fiction.htm)

### **THE JUNIPER PRIZE FOR FICTION**

**GUIDELINES:** Considers manuscripts of 150–350 pages; novels, novellas and short-story collections are eligible.



**ENTRY FEE:** \$25. **PRIZE:** \$1,500 and book publication by the University of Massachusetts Press. **DEADLINE:** Not yet announced; check website for the latest info. **LEARN MORE:** [umass.edu/umpress/juniper\\_fiction.html](http://umass.edu/umpress/juniper_fiction.html)

### THE KATHERINE ANNE PORTER PRIZE IN SHORT FICTION

**GUIDELINES:** Considers manuscripts of 27,500–50,000 words. **ENTRY FEE:** \$20. **PRIZE:** \$1,000 and book publication by the University of North Texas Press. **DEADLINE:** Not yet announced; check website for the latest info. **LEARN MORE:** [web3.unt.edu/untpress/potential\\_authors.cfm#subkap](http://web3.unt.edu/untpress/potential_authors.cfm#subkap)

### THE MARY MCCARTHY PRIZE IN SHORT FICTION

**GUIDELINES:** Considers manuscripts of 150–250 pages. **ENTRY FEE:** \$25. **PRIZE:** \$2,000 and book publication by Sarabande Books. **DEADLINE:** Manuscripts received Jan. 1–Feb. 15 each calendar year are considered. **LEARN MORE:** [sarabandebooksorg/?page\\_id=1105](http://sarabandebooksorg/?page_id=1105)

### MILKWEED EDITIONS NATIONAL FICTION PRIZE

**GUIDELINES:** Considers manuscripts of 150–400 pages; novels, novellas and short-story collections are eligible. **ENTRY FEE:** None. **PRIZE:** Book publication by Milkweed Editions and cash advance of \$5,000 against royalties. **DEADLINE:** Rolling. **LEARN MORE:** [milkweed.org/content/view/22/72](http://milkweed.org/content/view/22/72)

### THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY PRIZE IN SHORT FICTION

**GUIDELINES:** Considers manuscripts of 150–300 pages; submissions may include short stories, novellas or both (a single novella is not eligible). **ENTRY FEE:** \$20. **PRIZE:** Book publication by The Ohio State University Press and \$1,500 as an advance against royalties. **DEADLINE:** Manuscripts must be postmarked in January each year. **LEARN MORE:** [ohiostatepress.org](http://ohiostatepress.org)

### THE SPOKANE PRIZE FOR SHORT FICTION

**GUIDELINES:** Considers manuscripts of at least 98 pages and three stories. **ENTRY FEE:** \$25. **PRIZE:** \$2,000 and book publication by Eastern Washington University Press.

**DEADLINE:** Not yet announced; check website for latest info. **LEARN MORE:** [ewupress.ewu.edu/shortprize.htm](http://ewupress.ewu.edu/shortprize.htm)

## POETRY

### THE AMERICAN POETRY REVIEW/HONICKMAN FIRST BOOK PRIZE

**GUIDELINES:** Considers book-length manuscripts. **ENTRY FEE:** \$25. **PRIZE:** \$3,000 and book publication by Copper Canyon Press. **DEADLINE:** Not yet announced; check website for the latest info. **LEARN MORE:** [aprweb.org/aprhonickman-first-book-prize](http://aprweb.org/aprhonickman-first-book-prize)

### A. POULIN, JR. POETRY PRIZE

**GUIDELINES:** Considers manuscripts of 48–100 pages. **ENTRY FEE:** \$25. **PRIZE:** \$1,500 and book publication by BOA Editions. **DEADLINE:** Not yet announced; check website for the latest info. **LEARN MORE:** [boaeditions.org/submissions/A\\_Poulin\\_Prize.html](http://boaeditions.org/submissions/A_Poulin_Prize.html)

### BRITTINGHAM AND FELIX POLLAK PRIZES IN POETRY

**GUIDELINES:** Considers manuscripts of 50–80 pages; each manuscript submitted will be considered for both prizes. **ENTRY FEE:** \$25. **PRIZE:** \$1,000 cash prize, \$1,500 honorarium to cover expenses of reading in Madison, Wis., and book publication by The University of Wisconsin Press. **DEADLINE:** Manuscripts received Sept. 1–Oct. 1 each calendar year are considered. **LEARN MORE:** [uwpres.wisc.edu/poetryguide.html](http://uwpres.wisc.edu/poetryguide.html)

### THE DONALD HALL PRIZE IN POETRY

**GUIDELINES:** Considers manuscripts of a minimum of 48 pages. **ENTRY FEE:** \$10 for AWP members; \$25 for nonmembers. **PRIZE:** \$4,000 and book publication by University of Pittsburgh Press. **DEADLINE:** Feb. 28. **LEARN MORE:** [awpwriter.org/contests/series.htm](http://awpwriter.org/contests/series.htm)

### LENA-MILES WEVER TODD POETRY SERIES BOOK COMPETITION

**GUIDELINES:** Considers manuscripts of a minimum of 48 pages; entries must be unpublished as a collection, but individual poems may have been previously published. **ENTRY FEE:** \$20. **PRIZE:** \$1,000 and book publication by Pleiades Press. **DEADLINE:** Not yet announced; check

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website for the latest info. **LEARN MORE:** [www.ucmo.edu/englphil/pleiades/guidelines.html](http://www.ucmo.edu/englphil/pleiades/guidelines.html)

### **NEW ISSUES POETRY PRIZE**

**GUIDELINES:** Considers manuscripts of a minimum of 48 pages. **ENTRY FEE:** \$15. **PRIZE:** \$2,000 and book publication by New Issues Poetry & Prose. **DEADLINE:** Not yet announced; check website for the latest info and updated guidelines. **LEARN MORE:** [www.wmich.edu/newissues/NewIssuesPoetryPrize.html](http://www.wmich.edu/newissues/NewIssuesPoetryPrize.html)

### **THE WALT WHITMAN AWARD**

**GUIDELINES:** Considers manuscripts of 50–70 pages. **ENTRY FEE:** \$20. **PRIZE:** \$5,000, book publication by Louisiana State University Press and a one-month residency. **DEADLINE:** Check website for the latest info. **LEARN MORE:** [poets.org/page.php/prmID/110](http://poets.org/page.php/prmID/110)

### **THE WHITE PINE PRESS POETRY PRIZE**

**GUIDELINES:** Considers manuscripts of 60–80 pages. **ENTRY FEE:** \$25. **PRIZE:** \$1,000 and book publication by White Pine Press. **DEADLINE:** Not yet announced; check website for the latest info. **LEARN MORE:** [whitepine.org/poetry\\_prize.php](http://whitepine.org/poetry_prize.php)

## **CREATIVE NONFICTION**

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### **AWP AWARD SERIES IN CREATIVE NONFICTION**

**GUIDELINES:** Considers manuscripts of 150–300 pages. **ENTRY FEE:** \$10 for AWP members; \$25 for non-members. **PRIZE:** \$2,000 and book publication by The University of Georgia Press. **DEADLINE:** Feb. 28. **LEARN MORE:** [awpwriter.org/contests/series.htm](http://awpwriter.org/contests/series.htm)

## **MULTIPLE GENRES**

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### **THE AUTUMN HOUSE POETRY/FICTION PRIZE**

**GUIDELINES:** Considers poetry manuscripts of 50–80 pages and fiction manuscripts of 200–300 pages (novels, novellas, short-story collections are all eligible);

specify “Poetry Prize” or “Fiction Prize” on the entry envelope. **ENTRY FEE:** \$25. **PRIZE:** Book publication by Autumn House Press and \$2,500 (\$1,000 against royalties and \$1,500 travel grant to participate in the Autumn House Master Authors Series in Pittsburgh). **DEADLINE:** Not yet announced; check website for the latest info. **LEARN MORE:** [autumnhouse.org/contest-submissions](http://autumnhouse.org/contest-submissions)

### **THE HUDSON PRIZE**

**GUIDELINES:** Considers unpublished collections of poems or short stories. **ENTRY FEE:** \$25. **PRIZE:** \$1,000 and book publication by Black Lawrence Press, plus 10 author copies. **DEADLINE:** March 31 annually. **LEARN MORE:** [blacklawrencepress.com](http://blacklawrencepress.com)

### **THE MANY VOICES PROJECT**

**GUIDELINES:** Book-length manuscripts of poetry, creative nonfiction and fiction all eligible. **ENTRY FEE:** \$20. **PRIZE:** \$1,000 honorarium and book contract with New Rivers Press. **DEADLINE:** Not yet announced; check website for info. **LEARN MORE:** [newriverspress.com](http://newriverspress.com)

### **PRAIRIE SCHOONER BOOK PRIZE**

**GUIDELINES:** Considers fiction manuscripts of at least 150 pages and poetry manuscripts of at least 50. **ENTRY FEE:** \$25. **PRIZE:** \$3,000 and book publication by University of Nebraska Press. **DEADLINE:** Not yet announced; check website for the latest info. **LEARN MORE:** [prairieschooner.unl.edu/prizes/index.html](http://prairieschooner.unl.edu/prizes/index.html)

### **THE ST. LAWRENCE BOOK AWARD**

**GUIDELINES:** Considers unpublished collections of poems or short stories; open only to writers who have not yet published a full-length collection of poems or short stories. This is a contest for talented unpublished writers who want a legitimate shot at getting their work published in book form. **ENTRY FEE:** \$25. **PRIZE:** \$1,000 and book publication by Black Lawrence Press, plus 10 author copies. **DEADLINE:** Aug. 31. **LEARN MORE:** [blacklawrencepress.com](http://blacklawrencepress.com) 🏆

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**SCOTT FRANCIS** is an associate editor for *Writer’s Digest Books*. Prior to turning his focus to editing he served as marketing manager for *WD*. He is the author of *Monster Spotter’s Guide to North America* and co-author of *The Writer’s Book of Matches*. He blogs at [seescottwrite.wordpress.com](http://seescottwrite.wordpress.com).

## FICTION CONTESTS & AWARDS

*Here are 65 competitions for writers of novels,  
short stories, novellas and more.*

Publication is not the only way to get your work recognized. Contests and awards can also be great ways to gain recognition in the industry. New writers who win contests may be published for the first time as a result, while more experienced writers can gain valuable public attention for previously published work. Grants offered by large writing organizations can also offer monetary recognition to writers—giving them more financial freedom as they work on projects.

Winning a contest or award can launch a successful writing career—so why not try your luck. On the following pages you will find complete listings for 65 contests and awards for writers of adult fiction (literary fiction, popular fiction and everything in between). These contests offer you the opportunity for your work to be judged on the basis of quality alone without the outside factors (like budgets, trends and the marketplace) that sometimes influence publishing decisions. Some focus on form, such as short stories, novels or novellas, while others feature writing on particular themes or topics. Chances are, no matter what type of fiction you write, there is a contest or award program that may be a good match for you.

The most important thing when submitting your work is to follow the guidelines with religious fervor. Things like word count, pagination and whether or not your staple is horizontal or vertical may seem like pointless minutia, but following instructions to the letter proves to the judges that you're serious about both your own work and their contest. Pay attention to whether or not each competition is applicable to you and your work before submitting. Then, submit the best entry you can—and keep your fingers crossed. Good luck!

### ABBREVIATIONS

**ISBN:** Industry standard book number **MS.:** Manuscript **MSS.:** Manuscripts **SAS:** Self addressed stamped (as in postcard) **SASE:** Self addressed stamped envelope **TBA:** To be announced



### ALABAMA STATE COUNCIL ON THE ARTS INDIVIDUAL ARTIST FELLOWSHIP

201 Monroe St., Montgomery AL 36130-1800. (334) 242-4076, ext. 224. **FAX:** (334)240-3269. **E-MAIL:** randy.shoultis@arts.alabama.gov. **WEBSITE:** www.arts.state.al.us. **CONTACT:** Randy Shoultis, literature program manager. "To recognize the achievements and potential of Alabama writers." **PRIZE:** 1–2 \$5,000 fellowships awarded. **ENTRY FEE:** None. **GUIDELINES:** Guidelines available in January. For guidelines, fax, e-mail, visit website. Accepts inquiries by fax, e-mail and phone. "2 copies of the following should be submitted: a résumé and a list of published works with reviews, if available. A minimum of 10 pages of poetry or prose, but no more than 20 pages. Please label each page with title, artist's name and date. If published, indicate where and the date of publication." Judged by independent peer panel. Competition receives 25 submissions annually. 2-year residency required. **DEADLINE:** March 1 and applications can be submitted by egrant. Winners announced in June and notified by mail. List of winners available for SASE, fax, e-mail or visit website.

### ALLIGATOR JUNIPER'S NATIONAL WRITING CONTEST

Alligator Juniper, 220 Grove Ave., Prescott AZ 86301. (928)350-2012. **FAX:** (928)776-5137. **E-MAIL:** aj@prescott.edu. **WEBSITE:** www.prescott.edu/highlights/alligator\_juniper/index.html. **CONTACT:** Jeff Fearnside, managing editor. Annual. Competition/award for short stories. **PRIZE:** Winner receives \$500 and publication. Finalists are published and receive copies. **ENTRY FEE:** \$15 (includes copy of issue). Make checks payable to Alligator Juniper. **GUIDELINES:** Categories: fiction, creative nonfiction, poetry. Entries should be unpublished. Anyone may enter contest. Prose should be few than 30 pages; poetry 5 poems or less. "All entries are read and discussed by advanced writing students at Prescott College enrolled in the Alligator Juniper practicum class. This class is overseen by 2 faculty members, each of whom is a working writer in the genres of poetry, fiction and creative nonfiction. All entrants receive a personal letter from 1 of our staff regarding the status of their submission. We usually inform in late January. The

individual attention we devote to each manuscript takes time. We appreciate your patience." Accepts inquiries by fax, e-mail, phone. Cover letter should include name, address, phone, e-mail, word count and novel excerpt/story title. Writers may submit own work. "Send us your best work; we often don't know what we're looking for until we read it. Historically, winning work has grappled poetically and honestly with issues of race, sexuality, patriotism, politics, the environment and language itself. We publish work that is both long and short, traditional and experimental in its approaches. Our editorial staff is composed of savvy, college-aged readers; do your best to wow us." **DEADLINE:** Submission period is May 1–October 1. Winners announced in December. Results made available to entrants with SASE, by fax, by e-mail, and on website.

### AMERICAN LITERARY REVIEW SHORT FICTION AWARD

P.O. Box 311307, University of North Texas, Denton TX 76203-1307. (940)565-2755. **E-MAIL:** americanliteraryreview@gmail.com. **WEBSITE:** www.engl.unt.edu/alr. "To award excellence in short fiction." **PRIZE:** \$1,000 and publication. Judged by rotating outside writer. Past judges have included Marly Swick, Antonya Nelson and Jonis Agee. **ENTRY FEE:** \$15. **GUIDELINES:** Entries must be unpublished. Contest open to anyone not affiliated with the University of North Texas. "Only solidly crafted, character-driven stories will have the best chance for success." Winners announced and notified by mail and phone in February. List of winners available for SASE. For guidelines, send SASE or visit website. Accepts inquiries by email and phone. **DEADLINE:** September 1.

### AMERICAN MARKETS NEWSLETTER SHORT STORY COMPETITION

1974 46th Ave., San Francisco CA 94116. **E-MAIL:** sheila.oconnor@juno.com. Award is "to give short story writers more exposure." **PRIZE:** First place: \$300; second place: \$100; third place: \$50. Judged by a panel of independent judges. **ENTRY FEE:** \$12 per entry; \$20 for 2; \$25 for 3; \$30 for 4; \$5 each entry thereafter. **GUIDELINES:** For guidelines, send SASE, fax or e-mail. Contest

offered biannually. Published and unpublished stories are actively encouraged. Add a note of where and when previously published. Open to any writer. "All kinds of fiction are considered. We especially want women's pieces—romance, with a twist in the tale—but all will be considered." Accepts fiction and nonfiction up to 2,000 words. Entries are eligible for cash prizes and all entries are eligible for worldwide syndication whether they win or not. Send double-spaced manuscripts with your story/article title, byline, word count and address on the first page above your article/story's first paragraph (no need for separate cover page). There is no limit to the number of entries you may send. **DEADLINE:** June 30 and December 31. Results announced within 3 months of deadlines. Winners notified by mail if they include SASE.

#### **ART AFFAIR SHORT STORY AND WESTERN SHORT STORY CONTESTS**

P.O. Box 54302, Oklahoma City OK 73154. **E-MAIL:** artaffair@aol.com. **WEBSITE:** www.shadetreecreations.com. **CONTACT:** Barbara Shepherd. The annual Art Affair Writing Contests include (general) short story, mystery and western categories and offer **PRIZE:** First: \$50 and certificate; second: \$25 and certificate; and third: \$15 and certificate in all 3 categories. Honorable mention certificates will be awarded at the discretion of the judges. **ENTRY FEE:** \$5 per story. Make check to Art Affair. **GUIDELINES:** Guidelines available on website. Open to any writer. All short stories must be unpublished. Multiple entries accepted in both categories with separate entry fees for each. Submit original stories on any subject and timeframe for general short story category, submit original mystery (or suspense) short stories for mystery category, and submit original western stories for western category—word limit for all entries is 5,000 words. (Put word count in the upper right-hand corner of first page; mark "Mystery" or "Western" if applicable). All mss must be double-spaced on 8.5×11 white paper. Type title of short story on first page and headers on following pages. Include cover page with writer's name, address, phone number and ms title. Do not include SASE; mss will not be returned. **DEADLINE:**

October 1 (postmark). Winners' list will be published on the Art Affair website in December.

#### **THE ART OF MUSIC ANNUAL WRITING CONTEST**

The Art of Music, Inc., P.O. Box 85, Del Mar CA 92014-0085. (619)884-1401. **FAX:** (858)755-1104. **E-MAIL:** info@theartofmusicinc.org. **WEBSITE:** www.theartofmusicinc.org. **CONTACT:** Elizabeth C. Axford. Offered annually. **PRIZE:** Cash, trophy, certificate, publication in the anthology titled *The Art of Music: A Collection of Writings*, and copies of the book. Judged by a panel of published poets, authors and songwriters. **ENTRY FEE:** \$20 fee. **GUIDELINES:** Guidelines and entry form for SASE, on website or by e-mail. Categories are: essay, short story, poetry, song lyrics and illustrations for cover art. Open to any writer. "Make sure all work is fresh and original." All writings must be on music-related topics. The purpose of the contest is to promote the art of music through writing. Acquires 1-time rights. All entries must be accompanied by an entry form indicating category and age; parent signature is required of all writers under age 18. Poems may be of any length and in any style; essays and short stories should not exceed 5 double-spaced, typewritten pages. All entries shall be previously unpublished (except poems and song lyrics) and the original work of the author. Inquiries accepted by e-mail, phone. **DEADLINE:** June 5. Results announced October 31. Winners notified by mail. For contest results, send SASE or visit website.

#### **ARTIST TRUST FELLOWSHIP AWARD**

1835 12th Ave., Seattle WA 98122. (209)467-8734 ext 9. **FAX:** (206)467-9633. **WEBSITE:** artisttrust.org. **CONTACT:** Monica Miller, director of programs. "Artist Trust Fellowship awards practicing professional Washington State artists of exceptional talent and demonstrated ability." Annual. **PRIZE:** \$7,500. **ENTRY FEE:** None. **GUIDELINES:** Guidelines available around December; please check website. Accepts inquiries by e-mail, phone. "The Fellowship awards are multi-disciplinary awards. The categories for 2011 are literary, music, media and craft. Accepted genres for literary are poetry, fiction, graphic novels, experimental

works, creative nonfiction, screenplays, film scripts and teleplays.” Receives approximately 175 entries per category. Entries are judged by work samples as specified in the guidelines. Winners are selected by a multidisciplinary panel of artists and arts professionals. Entries can be unpublished or previously published. Washington State residents only. Length: up to 15 pages for poetry, fiction, graphic novels, experimental works and creative nonfiction, and up to 20 pages for screenplays, film scripts and teleplays. All mss must be typed with 12-pt font size or larger and cannot be single-spaced (except for poetry). Include artist statement and resume with name, address, phone, e-mail and novel/story title. “The Fellowship awards are highly competitive. Please follow guidelines with care.” **DEADLINE:** Approximately the 4th Friday of January. Website should be consulted for the exact date. Results announced in the spring. Winners notified by mail. Results available to entrants on website.

### AWP INTRO JOURNALS PROJECT

One University Drive, Bluffton OH 45817-2104. **E-MAIL:** awp@gmu.edu. **WEBSITE:** www.awpwriter.org. **CONTACT:** Susan Streeter Carpenter. Winners will be contacted in the spring of 2010. **PRIZE:** Each will receive an award letter, publication in a participating journal and a \$100 cash honorarium. Winning works will appear in the fall or winter issues of *Hayden’s Ferry Review*, *Mid-American Review*, *Colorado Review*, *Puerto del Sol*, *Controlled Burn*, *Quarterly West*, *Tampa Review* and *Artful Dodge*. **ENTRY FEE:** None. **GUIDELINES:** Categories: short stories, nonfiction and poetry. Judged by AWP. “This is a prize for students in Associated Writing Programs (AWP) member university creative writing programs only. Authors are nominated by the head of the creative writing department. Each school may nominate no more than 1 work of nonfiction, 1 work of short fiction and 3 poems. Nominations must be accompanied by a cover letter from the program director, which verifies that the enclosed nominations are by

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## GLIMMER TRAIN

**We pay out over \$45,000 to writers each year, nearly a third of that to emerging writers.** In a recent edition of *The Best American Short Stories*, of the top “100 distinguished short stories,” ten appeared in *Glimmer Train Stories*, more than any other publication in the country, including the *New Yorker*. Of those ten, three were those authors’ first stories accepted for publication.

Glimmer Train invites you to submit your short stories at our site ([www.glimmertrainpress.com](http://www.glimmertrainpress.com)); we two sisters read all online submissions ourselves. If your story is accepted for publication, it will be presented in one of the most respected and handsome short-story journals in print.

**We welcome your work!**

**Glimmer Train Press, Inc.**  
1211 NW Glisan, #207,  
Portland, OR, 97209  
[www.glimmertrain.org](http://www.glimmertrain.org)


### OUR COMPETITIONS

**Short Story Award for New Writers:** Open only to writers whose fiction has not appeared in a print publication with a circulation over 5,000. Any length under 12,000 words. Prizes: 1st place – \$1200 and publication; 2nd/3rd – \$500/\$300 and possible publication. Held in February, May, August, and November.

**Fiction Open:** Any length from 2,000 to 20,000 words. Open to all writers. Prizes: 1st place – \$2000 and publication; 2nd/3rd – \$1000/\$600 and possible publication. Held in March, June, September, and December.

**Very Short Fiction Award:** Any length under 3,000 words. Prizes: 1st place – \$1200 and publication; 2nd/3rd – \$500/\$300 and possible publication. Held in January and July.

**Family Matters:** Any length under 12,000 words. Prizes: 1st place – \$1200 and publication; 2nd/3rd – \$500/\$300 and possible publication. Held in April and October.



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students currently enrolled in the university's creative writing program. In the letter, the program must provide a permanent address for each nominated student." Open to students in AWP Member University Creative Writing Programs only. Accepts inquiries by e-mail, fax and phone. Guidelines available for SASE or on website. **DEADLINE:** First week of December (postmark). Entries must be unpublished. Results announced in spring. Winners notified by mail in spring. For contest results, send SASE or visit website.

### **BARD FICTION PRIZE**

P.O. Box 5000, Annandale-on-Hudson NY 12504-5000. (845)758-7087. **FAX:** (845)758-7043. **E-MAIL:** bfp@bard.edu. **WEBSITE:** www.bard.edu/bfp. **CONTACT:** Irene Zedlacher. The Bard Fiction Prize is intended to encourage and support young writers of fiction to pursue their creative goals and to provide an opportunity to work in a fertile and intellectual environment. **PRIZE:** \$30,000 cash award and appointment as writer-in-residence at Bard College for 1 semester. **ENTRY FEE:** None. **GUIDELINES:** Entries must be previously published. Open to U.S. citizens aged 39 and below. Cover letter should include name, address, phone, e-mail and name of publisher where book was previously published. Guidelines available by SASE, fax, phone, e-mail or on website. Judged by committee of 5 judges (authors associated with Bard College). **DEADLINE:** July 15. Results announced by October 15. Winners notified by phone. For contest results, e-mail or visit website.

### **BEST LESBIAN EROTICA**

BLE, 31-64 21<sup>st</sup> St., #319, Long Island City NY 11106. **E-MAIL:** kwarnockble@gmail.com. **CONTACT:** Kathleen Warnock, series editor. **PRIZE:** Publication in contest anthology. **ENTRY FEE:** None. **GUIDELINES:** Categories: novel excerpts, short stories, other prose; poetry will be considered but is not encouraged. Include cover page with author's name, title of submission(s), address, phone, fax, e-mail. All submissions must be typed and double-spaced. You may submit double-sided copies. Length: 5,000 words. You may submit 2 different pieces of work. Submit 2 hard copies of each submission. Will only accept e-mail copies if the following conditions

apply: You live outside of North America or Europe; the cost of postage would be prohibitive from your home country, the post office system in your country is dreadful (U.S. does not count); the content of your submission may be illegal to send via postal mail in your home country. Accepts both previously published and unpublished material, but does not accept simultaneous submissions to another annual erotica anthology. Open to any writer. All submissions must include SASE or an e-mail address for response. If no e-mail address, then please include SASE. No mss will be returned. **DEADLINE:** Email for exact deadline.

### **BINGHAMTON UNIVERSITY JOHN GARDNER FICTION BOOK AWARD**

P.O. Box 6000, Binghamton NY 13902. (607)777-2713. **FAX:** (607)777-2408. **E-MAIL:** cwpro@binghamton.edu. **WEBSITE:** english.binghamton.edu/cwpro. **CONTACT:** Maria Mazziotti Gillan, director. Award's purpose is "to serve the literary community by calling attention to outstanding books of fiction." **PRIZE:** \$1,000. **ENTRY FEE:** None. **GUIDELINES:** Open to any writer. Categories: novels and short story collections. Entry must have been published in book form with a minimum press run of 500. Each book submitted must be accompanied by an application form, available online or send SASE to above address. Submit 3 copies of the book; copies will not be returned. Publishers may submit more than 1 book for prize consideration. Judged by "rotating outside judges." **DEADLINE:** March 1. Entries must have appeared in print between January 1–December 31 of the year preceding the award. Results announced in summer. Winners notified by e-mail or phone. For contest results, send SASE or visit website.

### **JOHN W. CAMPBELL MEMORIAL AWARD FOR BEST SCIENCE FICTION NOVEL OF THE YEAR**

English Department, University of Kansas, Lawrence KS 66045. (785)864-3380. **FAX:** (785)864-1159. **E-MAIL:** jgunn@ku.edu. **WEBSITE:** www.ku.edu/~sfcenter. **CONTACT:** James Gunn, professor and director. Award to "honor the best science fiction novel of the year." **PRIZE:** Trophy. Winners receive an expense-paid trip to the university to receive their award. Their names

are also engraved on a permanent trophy. **ENTRY FEE:** None. **GUIDELINES:** Categories: novels. Judged by a jury. Entries must be previously published. Open to any writer. Accepts inquiries by e-mail and fax. "Ordinarily publishers should submit work, but authors have done so when publishers would not. Send for list of jurors." **DEADLINE:** See website. Results announced in July. For contest results, send SASE.

**THE CRUCIBLE POETRY AND FICTION COMPETITION**

Barton College, College Station, Wilson NC 27893. (252)399-6343. **E-MAIL:** crucible@barton.edu. **WEBSITE:** www.barton.edu/academics/english.crucible.htm. **CONTACT:** Terrence L. Grimes, editor. Offered annually for unpublished short stories. **PRIZE:** \$150 (first prize); \$100 (second prize) and publication in *Crucible*. Competition receives 300 entries. **ENTRY FEE:** None. **GUIDELINES:** Open to any writer. Categories: fiction should be 8,000 words or fewer. Judged by in-house edi-

torial board. Entries should be submitted electronically. Guidelines available online. **DEADLINE:** April. "The best time to submit is December-April." Results announced in late summer. Winners notified by e-mail.


**DEAD OF WINTER**

**E-MAIL:** editors@toasted-cheese.com. **WEBSITE:** www.toasted-cheese.com. The contest is a winter-themed horror fiction contest with a new topic each year. **PRIZE:** Amazon gift certificates in the amount of \$20, \$15 and \$10; publication in *Toasted Cheese*. Also offers honorable mention. Categories: short stories. **ENTRY FEE:** None. **GUIDELINES:** Guidelines available in November on website. Topic and word limit announced Nov. 1. The topic is usually geared toward a supernatural theme. Entries must be unpublished. Word limit varies each year. Open to any writer. Accepts inquiries by e-mail. "Write a smart, original story. We have further guidelines on the website." Cover letter should include name, address, e-mail, word count and title. Judged by 2 *Toasted Cheese*


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editors who blind judge each contest. Each judge uses her own criteria to rate entries. **DEADLINE:** December 21. Results announced January 31. Winners notified by e-mail. List of winners on website.

### DELAWARE DIVISION OF THE ARTS

820 N. French St., Wilmington DE 19801. (302)577-8278. **FAX:** (302)577-6561. **WEBSITE:** [www.artsdel.org](http://www.artsdel.org). **CONTACT:** Kristin Pleasanton, art and artist services coordinator. Award “to help further careers of emerging and established professional artists.” **PRIZE:** \$10,000 for masters; \$6,000 for established professionals; \$3,000 for emerging professionals. **ENTRY FEE:** None. **GUIDELINES:** For Delaware residents only. Guidelines available after May 1 on website. Accepts inquiries by e-mail, phone. Expects to receive 25 fiction entries. “Follow all instructions and choose your best work sample.” Judged by out-of-state, nationally recognized professionals in each artistic discipline. **DEADLINE:** August 1. Results announced in December. Winners notified by mail. Results available on website.

### EATON LITERARY AGENCY’S ANNUAL AWARDS PROGRAM

P.O. Box 49795, Sarasota FL 34230. (941)366-6589. **FAX:** (941)365-4679. **E-MAIL:** [eatonlit@aol.com](mailto:eatonlit@aol.com). **WEBSITE:** [www.eatonliterary.com](http://www.eatonliterary.com). **CONTACT:** Richard Lawrence, vice president. **PRIZE:** \$2,500 (more than 10,000 words); \$500 (fewer than 10,000 words). **ENTRY FEE:** None. **GUIDELINES:** Entries must be unpublished. Open to any writer. Offered biannually. Guidelines available for SASE, by fax, e-mail or on website. Judged by an independent agency in conjunction with some members of Eaton’s staff. Accepts inquiries by fax, phone and e-mail. **DEADLINE:** March 31 (mss fewer than 10,000 words); August 31 (mss more than 10,000 words). Results announced in April and September. Winners notified by mail.

### GEORGETOWN REVIEW PRIZE

400 East College St., Box 227, Georgetown KY 40324. (502) 863-8308. **FAX:** (502)863-8888. **E-MAIL:** [gtownreview@georgetowncollege.edu](mailto:gtownreview@georgetowncollege.edu). **WEBSITE:** [georgetownreview.georgetowncollege.edu](http://georgetownreview.georgetowncollege.edu). **CONTACT:** Steve Carter,

editor. “Contest for short stories, poetry and creative nonfiction.” Annual. **PRIZE:** \$1,000 and publication; runners-up receive publication. **ENTRY FEE:** \$10 for first entry, \$5 for each 1 thereafter. Make checks payable to *Georgetown Review*. **GUIDELINES:** Guidelines available in July. Entries should be unpublished. Contest open to anyone except family or friends of the editors. Cover letter and ms should include name, address, phone, e-mail, novel/story title. Writers may submit own work. “We’re just looking to publish quality work. Sometimes our contests are themed, so check the website for details.” Accepts inquiries by e-mail. Receives approximately 400 entries for each category. Entries are judged by the editors. **DEADLINE:** November 15. Results announced February or March. Winners notified by e-mail. Results made available to entrants with SASE.

### GIVAL PRESS NOVEL AWARD

P.O. Box 3812, Arlington VA 22203. (703)351-0079. **E-MAIL:** [givalpress@yahoo.com](mailto:givalpress@yahoo.com). **WEBSITE:** [www.givalpress.com](http://www.givalpress.com). **CONTACT:** Robert L. Giron, publisher. “To award the best literary novel.” Annual. **PRIZE:** \$3,000, publication and author’s copies. **ENTRY FEE:** \$50. Make checks payable to Gival Press, LLC. **GUIDELINES:** Categories: literary novel. Entries should be unpublished. Open to any author who writes original work in English. Length: 30,000–100,000 words. Cover letter should include name, address, phone, e-mail, word count and novel title. Only the title and word count should appear on the actual ms. Writers may submit own work. “Review the types of mss Gival Press has published. We stress literary works.” Receives 100–120 entries per category. Final judge is announced after winner is chosen. Entries read anonymously. Guidelines with SASE, by phone, by e-mail or on website. Accepts inquiries by e-mail. **DEADLINE:** May 30, each year. Results announced late fall of same year. Winners notified by phone. Results made available to entrants with SASE, by e-mail and on website.

### GIVAL PRESS SHORT STORY AWARD

P.O. Box 3812, Arlington VA 22203. (703)351-0079. **E-MAIL:** [givalpress@yahoo.com](mailto:givalpress@yahoo.com). **WEBSITE:** [www.givalpress.com](http://www.givalpress.com). **CONTACT:** Robert L. Giron, publisher. “To



award the best literary short story.” Annual. **PRIZE:** \$1,000 and publication on website. **ENTRY FEE:** \$25. Make checks payable to Gival Press, LLC. **GUIDELINES:** Category: literary short story. Guidelines available online, via e-mail or by mail. Entries must be unpublished. Receives about 100–150 entries per category. Entries are judged anonymously. Open to anyone who writes original short stories in English. Length: 5,000–15,000 words. Include name, address, phone, e-mail, word count, title on cover letter. Only the title and word count should be found on ms. Writers may submit their own ficiton. “We publish literary works.” **DEADLINE:** August 8, every year. Results announced in the fall of the same year. Winners notified by phone. Results available with SASE, by e-mail, on website.

### GLIMMER TRAIN’S FAMILY MATTERS

1211 NW Glisan St. Suite 207, Portland OR 97209. (503)221-0836. **FAX:** (503)221-0837. **WEBSITE:** [www.glimmertrain.org](http://www.glimmertrain.org). **CONTACT:** Susan Burmeister-Brown, co-editor. **PRIZE:** First place: \$1,200, publication in *Glimmer Train Stories* and 20 copies of that issue; first/second runners-up receive \$500/\$300 (respectively) and possible publication in *Glimmer Train Stories*.

**ENTRY FEE:** \$15. **GUIDELINES:** Open to all writers. Make your submissions on the website. Offered twice a year for unpublished stories about family. Word count should not exceed 12,000. **DEADLINE:** Contest open the months of April and October. Winners will be notified and results will be posted 2 months after the close of each competition.

### GLIMMER TRAIN’S FICTION OPEN

1211 NW Glisan St., Suite 207, Portland OR 97209. (503)221-0836. **FAX:** (503)221-0837. **WEBSITE:** [www.glimmertrain.com](http://www.glimmertrain.com). **CONTACT:** Susan Burmeister-Brown, co-editor. **PRIZE:** First place: \$2,000, publication in *Glimmer Train Stories* and 20 copies of that issue; first/second runners-up: \$1,000/\$600 (respectively) and possible publication in *Glimmer Train Stories*. **ENTRY FEE:** \$20/story. **GUIDELINES:** Offered quarterly for unpublished stories on any theme. Word count should not exceed 20,000. Make your submissions online ([www.glimmertrain.org](http://www.glimmertrain.org)). **DEADLINE:** Contest open during the months of March, June, September and December. Winners will be called and results announced 2 months after the close of each contest.

### AVOID INERT DESCRIPTION

Cut off from character and action, our descriptions read like items in a glass museum display case, curious but inert. If I write, “A warm breeze blew through the open window,” that breeze blows strictly for itself and affects nothing. If I write, “The breeze through the open window warmed Maggie’s skin and made her think of summers on Martha’s Vineyard,” I’m not just shooting the breeze but describing something that’s happening to someone. Because fiction has but one subject, and that subject is people, no description should exist separate and apart from that subject.

Here’s a description I labored on for some time, of a trip on the Staten Island Ferry at dusk. This was my first go:

By the time the ferry leaves it is late afternoon; the sun is setting. Seagulls wheel over the garbage-strewn waves as the ferry pulls away from the terminal, serving up a

gorgeous view of the towers of Wall Street, silent and gleaming, a view that all but a few passengers ignore.

Not an awful description, but perfunctory, inert and imprecise. What about that sunset? What sort of garbage? The above description makes the reader do all the heavy lifting. We long for eye candy; instead we get epithets: gorgeous. Furthermore, as written, the scene unfolds, like the proverbial falling tree, in a vacuum, with no one there to experience or interact with it; it is a scene with no character(s)—which is, if not altogether impossible, a contradiction. That this is a first-person narrative only increases the author’s obligation to evoke character with each line, to make this as much a description of the narrator as of the scenery.

—Excerpted from *By Cunning & Craft* by Peter Selgin



## GLIMMER TRAIN'S SHORT STORY AWARD FOR NEW WRITERS

1211 NW Glisan St., Suite 207, Portland OR 97209. (503)221-0836. **FAX:** (503)221-0837. **WEBSITE:** [www.glimmertrain.com](http://www.glimmertrain.com). **CONTACT:** Susan Burmeister-Brown, co-editor. **PRIZE:** First place: receives \$1,200, publication in *Glimmer Train Stories* and 20 copies of that issue. First/second runners-up receive \$500/\$300 (respectively) and possible publication in *Glimmer Train Stories*. **ENTRY FEE:** \$15/story. **GUIDELINES:** Offered quarterly for any writer whose fiction hasn't appeared in a nationally-distributed publication with a circulation over 5,000. Word count should not exceed 12,000 words. Stories must be previously unpublished. Make your submissions online at [www.glimmertrain.org](http://www.glimmertrain.org). "We are very open to the work of new writers. Of the 100 distinguished short stories listed in a recent edition of the *Best American Short Stories*, 10 first appeared in *Glimmer Train Stories*—more than in any other publication, including the *New Yorker*. 3 of those 10 were the author's first publication." **DEADLINE:** Contest open in the months of February, May, August and November. Winners will be called and results announced 2 months after the close of each contest.

## GLIMMER TRAIN'S VERY SHORT FICTION AWARD

1211 NW Glisan St., Suite 207, Portland OR 97209. (503)221-0836. **FAX:** (503)221-0837. **WEBSITE:** [www.glimmertrain.com](http://www.glimmertrain.com). **CONTACT:** Susan Burmeister-Brown, co-editor. **PRIZE:** \$1,200 and publication in *Glimmer Train Stories* and 20 author's copies (first place); first/second runners-up: \$500/\$300 (respectively) and possible publication. **ENTRY FEE:** \$15/story. **GUIDELINES:** Award to encourage the art of the very short story. "We want to read your original, unpublished, very short story—word count not to exceed 3,000 words." Open to all writers. Make your submissions online at [www.glimmertrain.org](http://www.glimmertrain.org). **DEADLINE:** Contest open in the months of January and July. Winners will be called and results announced 2 months after the close of each contest.

## GRANTS FOR ARTIST'S PROJECTS

1835 12th Ave., Seattle WA 98122. (206)467-8734. **FAX:** (206)467-9633. **E-MAIL:** [info@artisttrust.org](mailto:info@artisttrust.org). **WEBSITE:** [www.artisttrust.org](http://www.artisttrust.org). **CONTACT:** Monica Miller, director of programs. "The GAP Program provides support for artist-generated projects, which can include (but are not limited to) the development, completion or presentation of new work." Annual. **PRIZE:** Maximum of \$1,500 for



### EDIT FOR TENSION

The most tense fiction is pared down to the essentials, with every word in every sentence having a distinct purpose, every sentence in every paragraph being necessary to the whole, and every scene contributing to the story line. Every writer has a different approach to editing, but generally it's best to edit in stages, examining separate elements or effects in each stage of editing.

No matter your system, your goal should be to decide what's essential and what's gratuitous to—or otherwise a digression from—the essence of your story. Begin by casting an eye at overall flow and pacing, both of which are linked to tension. To give your story the best chance of catching contest judges' attentions, consider these questions:

- Have you begun the story at the last possible moment?

- Does the opening create intense curiosity?
- Is there a single dramatic question that focuses the story?
- Is the story overpopulated?
- Does the story locale contribute to the tension?
- Are the subplots a source of tension?
- Do flashbacks contain tension, or do they meander backward in time?
- Is there a major reversal or surprise midway?
- Is there too little or too much foreshadowing?
- Have you withheld information from the reader until the last moment?
- Are the stakes high while the consequences for failure dreadful?

—Excerpted from *Between the Lines* by Jessica Page Morrell

projects. **ENTRY FEE:** None. **GUIDELINES:** Entries can be unpublished or previously published. Washington State residents only. Length: 8 pages max for poetry, fiction, graphic novels, experimental work and creative nonfiction; up to 12 pages for screenplays, film scripts and teleplays. All mss must be typed with a 12-pt font size or larger and cannot be single-spaced (except for poetry). Include application with project proposal and budget, as well as résumé with name, address, phone, e-mail and novel/story title. "GAP awards are highly competitive. Please follow guidelines with care." Accepted are poetry, fiction, graphic novels, experimental works, creative nonfiction, screenplays, film scripts and teleplays. Entries are judged by work sample as specified in the guidelines. Winners are selected by a discipline-specific panel of artists and artist professionals. Guidelines available in May. Accepts inquiries by mail, phone. Submission period is May–June. **DEADLINE:** Approximately the 4th Friday of June. Website should be consulted for exact date. Results announced in the fall. Winners notified by mail. Results made available to entrants by mail and on website.

### **GREAT LAKES COLLEGES ASSOCIATION NEW WRITERS AWARD**

535 W. William, Suite 301, Ann Arbor MI 48103. (734)661-2350. **FAX:** (734)661-2349. **E-MAIL:** shackelford@glca.org. **CONTACT:** Greg Wegner. **PRIZE:** Winners are invited to tour the GLCA colleges. An honorarium of \$500 will be guaranteed the author by each GLCA member college they visit. **ENTRY FEE:** None. **GUIDELINES:** Guidelines available online. Award for first publication, 1 in each category of fiction, creative nonfiction and poetry. Writer must be nominated by publisher or can submit work if self-published. Accepts inquiries by e-mail. Judged by professors from member colleges. **DEADLINE:** July 25. Open to any writer. Submit 4 copies of the book to Greg Wegner. Results announced in winter.

### **THE GRUB STREET BOOK PRIZE IN FICTION**

160 Boylston St., Boston MA 02116. (617)695-0075. **FAX:** (617)695-0075. **E-MAIL:** info@grubstreet.org. **WEBSITE:** grubstreet.org. **CONTACT:** Christopher Castellani,

artistic director. "Supports writers who are publishing beyond their first or second, third, fourth (or beyond...) book, and who live outside of New England." Annual. Competition/award for short story collections, novels. **PRIZE:** Each winner receives a \$1,000 honorarium and a Friday night reading/book party at Grub Street's event space in downtown Boston. The reading and party are co-sponsored by a local independent bookstore, which will sell books at the event. Winners will lead a 2-hour informal craft class on a topic of their choice for a small group of aspiring Grub Street writers. Winners also invited as guest authors to Muse and the Marketplace literary conference. Grub Street provides accommodations for all time in Boston and covers all travel and meal expenses. **ENTRY FEE:** \$10. Send credit card information or make checks payable to Grub Street. **GUIDELINES:** Guidelines available in June. Categories: fiction, poetry and nonfiction. Accepts inquiries by fax, e-mail and phone. Entries are judged by a guest judge and committee of readers drawn from the Grub Street staff. Committee members negotiate their top picks at a meeting facilitated by the guest judge. Entries should be previously published or under contract. Publication date must be in 2010 or 2011, and the hardcover or paperback original must be available to booksellers by the time of the winner's visit to Boston. Galleys may be submitted for the contest as long as the first edition is published by May 1, 2011. All applicants must have at least 1 previously published novel or short story collection (self-publication not eligible), and must not primarily reside in the following states: Massachusetts, Vermont, Maine, Connecticut, New Hampshire or Rhode Island. Cover letter should include name, address, phone, e-mail and novel/story title. Also include a curriculum vitae and a 500-word synopsis of the proposed craft class. Writers may submit own work. "Grub Street's top criterion is the overall literary merit of the work submitted, the award committee especially encourages writers publishing with small presses, writers of short story collections, and writers of color to apply. Grub Street also wants the award to benefit writers for whom a trip to Boston will likely expand their readership in a meaningful way. Please give careful thought to your proposal for the craft class, and please plan it as a 2-hour gathering



for a group of 15 adult writers of mixed experience.”  
**DEADLINE:** Different deadlines apply for each category. Results announced 2–3 months after submission deadline. Previous winners: Alan Cheuse’s *To Catch the Lightning*, Dinty W. Moore’s *Between Panic and Desire* and Rick Barot’s *The Darker Fall*.

### LORIAN HEMINGWAY SHORT STORY COMPETITION

P.O. Box 993, Key West FL 33041-0993. (305)294-0320.  
**E-MAIL:** shortstorykw@gmail.com. **WEBSITE:** www.shortstorycompetition.com. **CONTACT:** Jeff Baker, co-director; Joanne Denning, contest development director. Award to “encourage literary excellence and the efforts of writers whose voices have yet to be heard.” **PRIZE:** \$1,000 (first prize), \$500 (second prize), \$500 (third prize), honorable mentions. *The Saturday Evening Post* will be in addition to the first-place prize of \$1,000. **ENTRY FEE:** \$12. **GUIDELINES:** Competition for short stories. Judged by a panel of writers, editors and literary scholars selected by author Lorian Hemingway. Guidelines available in January for SASE, by e-mail or on website. **DEADLINE:** See website.

### TOM HOWARD/JOHN H. REID SHORT STORY CONTEST

(866)946-9748. **FAX:** (413)280-0539. **E-MAIL:** johnreid@mail.qango.com. **WEBSITE:** www.winningwriters.com. This award honors the best short stories, essays and other works of prose being written today.” Annual. **PRIZE:** \$3,000 (first prize), \$1,000 (second prize), \$400 (third prize), \$250 (fourth prize). There will also be 5 High Distinction Awards of \$200 each and 6 Most Highly Commended Awards of \$150 each. The top 10 entries will be published on the Winning Writers website and announced in Tom Howard Contest News and the Winning Writers Newsletter. **ENTRY FEE:** \$15 per entry. Make checks payable to Winning Writers (U.S. funds only, please). **GUIDELINES:** Guidelines available in July on website. Prefers inquiries by e-mail. Categories: All entries are judged in 1 group. “Both published and unpublished works are accepted. In the case of published work, the contestant must own the online publication rights.” Open to all writers. Length:

5,000 words max per entry. Cover letter should include name, address, phone, e-mail, story title, place(s) where story was previously published (if any). Only the title should be on the actual ms. Writers may submit own work. “Read past winning entries at [www.winningwriters.com/contests/tomstory/ts\\_pastwinners.php](http://www.winningwriters.com/contests/tomstory/ts_pastwinners.php). We received 1,641 entries for the 2009 contest.” Judged by a former journalist and magazine editor, John H. Reid. Mr. Reid has judged literary contests for more than 15 years. He has published several novels, a collection of poetry, a guide to winning literary contests and 15 books of film criticism and movie history. He is assisted by Dee C. Konrad, a leading educator and published author, who served as Associate Professor of English at Barat College of DePaul University and dean of Liberal Arts and Sciences for the year 2000–2001. **DEADLINE:** March 31. Results announced September 15. Winners notified by e-mail. Results made available to entrants on website.

### THE JULIA WARD HOWE/BOSTON AUTHORS AWARD

79 Moore Rd, Wayland MA 01778. (617)783-1357.  
**E-MAIL:** bostonauthors@aol.com. **WEBSITE:** www.bostonauthorsclub.org. **CONTACT:** Alan Lawson. This annual award honors Julia Ward Howe and her literary friends who founded the Boston Authors Club in 1900. It also honors the membership over 111 years, consisting of novelists, biographers, historians, governors, senators, philosophers, poets, playwrights and other luminaries. **PRIZE:** \$1,000 in each category. **ENTRY FEE:** None. **GUIDELINES:** There are 2 categories: trade books and books for young readers (beginning with chapter books through young adult books). Works of fiction, nonfiction, memoir, poetry and biography published in current year are eligible. Authors must live or have lived (college counts) within a 100-mile radius of Boston. Subsidized books, cook books and picture books are not eligible. **DEADLINE:** January 15.

### INDIANA REVIEW ½ K (SHORT-SHORT/ PROSE-POEM) CONTEST

BH 465/Indiana University, 1020 E. Kirkwood Ave., Bloomington IN 47405-7103. (812)855-3439. **FAX:**

(812)855-4253. **E-MAIL:** [inreview@indiana.edu](mailto:inreview@indiana.edu). **WEBSITE:** [www.indianareview.edu](http://www.indianareview.edu). **CONTACT:** Alessandra Simmons, editor. Competition for fiction and prose poems no longer than 500 words. **PRIZE:** \$1,000 plus publication, contributor's copies and a year's subscription. All entries considered for publication. Judged by *Indiana Review* staff and outside judges. **ENTRY FEE:** \$15 fee for no more than 3 pieces (includes a year's subscription, 2 issues). Make checks payable to *Indiana Review*. **GUIDELINES:** Entries must be unpublished. Guidelines available in March for SASE, by phone, e-mail, on website or in publication. Length: 500 words, 3 mss per entry. Open to any writer. Cover letter should include name, address, phone, e-mail, word count and title. No identifying information on ms. "We look for command of language and form." For contest results, send SASE or visit website. See website for detailed guidelines. **DEADLINE:** June. Results announced in August. Winners notified by mail.

### INDIANA REVIEW FICTION CONTEST

BH 465/Indiana University, 1020 E. Kirkwood Ave., Bloomington IN 47405-7103. (812)855-3439. **FAX:** (812)855-4253. **E-MAIL:** [inreview@indiana.edu](mailto:inreview@indiana.edu). **WEBSITE:** [www.indianareview.org](http://www.indianareview.org). **CONTACT:** Alessandra Simmons, editor. Contest for fiction in any style and on any subject. **PRIZE:** \$1,000, publication in the *Indiana Review* and contributor's copies. Judged by *Indiana Review* staff and outside judges. **ENTRY FEE:** \$15 fee (includes a year's subscription). **GUIDELINES:** Entries must be unpublished. Mss will not be returned. No previously published work, or works forthcoming elsewhere, are eligible. Simultaneous submissions accepted, but in the event of entrant withdrawal, contest fee will not be refunded. Length: 35 pages maximum, double-spaced. Open to any writer. Cover letter must include name, address, phone number and title of story. Entrant's name should appear only in the cover letter, as all entries will be considered anonymously. For contest results, send SASE. "We look for a command of language and structure, as well as a facility with compelling and unusual subject matter. It's a good idea to obtain copies of issues featuring past winners to get a more concrete idea of what we are looking for." See website for updates to guidelines. **DEADLINE:**

### USE GOOD DIALOGUE TO COLOR YOUR SCENES



A great story premise will not stand without solid scenes to prop it up. Colorful characters can flit across the page, but unless they are engaged in pitched battle, the reader just won't care.

Don't let your scenes fall into cliché or monotony. Always look for ways to freshen them up. One technique to help you do just that is to make your dialogue flow and brings readers into your story through characters' speech, words and rhythm.

If you're stuck on a scene in the revision process, try writing it using only dialogue. Let it flow. Don't think much about it. When you're finished, you can look back and figure out what the scene is really about.

I once wrote a scene between competing lawyers. Part of it went like this:

"You think you can get away with that?"

"Whatever works."

"Disbarment works, too."

"You want to try to prove that? Know what that'll make you look like?"

"Don't presume to know what I will or will not do."

"I know you better than your wife, Phil."

That last line of dialogue came out of nowhere. Why did the character say that? I could have just edited it out, of course, but it seemed far better to explore the implications. What that led to was a plot point where the one lawyer revealed he'd had an investigator on Phil for six months. And had pictures and places and dates Phil would not want revealed to his wife.

All that just from playing with dialogue. Try it, and you'll discover undercurrents for your scene you didn't know were there. Liven up your writing with dialogue, and keep readers (and contest judges) reading.

—James Scott Bell

mid-October. Results announced in January. Winners notified by mail.

**E.M. KOEPEL SHORT FICTION AWARD**

P.O. Box 140310, Gainesville FL 32614-0310. **WEBSITE:** [www.writecorner.com](http://www.writecorner.com). **CONTACT:** Mary Sue Koepfel, editor. Award for short stories. **PRIZE:** \$1,100 first prize, and \$100 for editors' choices. Winning stories published on website. **ENTRY FEE:** \$15 first story, \$10 each additional story. Make checks payable to Writecorner Press. **GUIDELINES:** Guidelines available for SASE or on website. Entries must be unpublished. Open to any writer. Send 2 title pages: 1 with title only and 1 with title, name, address, phone, e-mail, short bio. Place no other identification of the author on the ms that will be used in the judging. Accepts inquiries by e-mail and phone. Expects 300+ entries. Judged by award-winning writers. **DEADLINE:** October 1–April 30. Winners notified by mail or phone in July (or earlier). For results, send SASE or see website.

**LEAGUE OF UTAH WRITERS CONTEST**

P.O. Box 1359, St. George UT 84771. (435)619-0331. **E-MAIL:** [marybawriter@msn.com](mailto:marybawriter@msn.com). **WEBSITE:** [www.luwrite.com](http://www.luwrite.com). **CONTACT:** Mary Barnes, membership chair. "The LUW Contest has been held since 1935 to give Utah writers an opportunity to get their works read and critiqued. It also encourages writers to keep writing in

an effort to get published." **PRIZE:** Offers cash prizes, see rules and guidelines for details. **ENTRY FEE:** See guidelines. **GUIDELINES:** Competition for short stories and novels. Guidelines available after February 15 for SASE or on website. Accepts inquiries by fax, e-mail and phone. Entries must be unpublished. Open to any writer. "Separate categories include speculative fiction, children's and teens' books, plus full-length book categories and more." Judged by professional authors, editors and publishers. "Read the contest rules and guidelines. Don't skim over them. Rules change and are revised from year to year. Don't forget to enclose your entry fee when mailing your entries." **DEADLINE:** June 16. Winners announced at the Annual Writers Roundup in September. List of winners available after September 30 for SASE.

**LESBIAN WRITERS FUND**

116 E. 16th St., 7th Floor, New York NY 10003. (212)529-8021. **E-MAIL:** [grants@astraeafoundation.org](mailto:grants@astraeafoundation.org). **WEBSITE:** [www.astraeafoundation.org](http://www.astraeafoundation.org). "This award is to support the work of emerging lesbian writers, and to acknowledge the contributions of established writers to our movement and culture." Annual. **PRIZE:** First place awardees and 2 runners-up in the poetry and fiction categories

**BUILD MOMENTUM IN YOUR FICTION**

Did you ever get lost in the middle of writing a manuscript? Have you ever wondered, deep in revisions, if your story holds together or any longer makes sense? Have you ever lost steam?

Steal from life. That's what it's for, isn't it? How often, when something bad happened to you, did you think to yourself, at least this will be good material for a story some day?

Well, now's your chance. What has happened to you, its details and specifics, are tools with which you can make every scene personal and powerful.

Use the following prompts whenever you are stuck, or if inspiration simply is low.

1. Choose any scene that seems weak or wandering. Who is the point-of-view character?

2. Identify whatever this character feels most strongly in this scene. Fury? Futility? Betrayal? Hope? Joy? Arousal? Shame? Grief? Pride? Self-loathing? Security?
3. Recall your own life. What was the time when you most strongly felt the emotion you identified in the last step?
4. In this experience from your life, what twisted the knife or put the icing on the cake? It would have stirred this feeling anyway, but what really provoked it was ... what?
5. Give the details of your experience to your character, right now, in this very scene.

— *Excerpted from The Fire in Fiction: Passion, Purpose and Techniques to Make Your Novel Great by Donald Maass.*



will receive cash awards (\$10,000 for awardee; \$1,500 for runners-up). **ENTRY FEE:** \$5. Make checks payable to Astraea Lesbian Foundation for Justice. Accepts inquiries by e-mail, phone. **GUIDELINES:** Competition/award for short stories, novels, story collections and poetry. Submit up to 20 pages from a novel or a collection of short stories. Mss must be double-spaced. "While there is no minimum page limit for fiction submissions, we recommend that you submit at least 10 pages, so that the judges gain a deeper understanding of your work." Name should not appear on ms; all pages must have identification number provided with application. Writers must submit own work. "To be eligible for an award from the Lesbian Writers Fund, you must satisfy all of the following: You are a lesbian-identified writer of poetry and/or fiction. Your submission is a poetry or fiction sample in English (nonfiction, screenplays or plays are ineligible). You reside in the U.S. Your submitted work includes some lesbian content (e.g. lesbian desire, identity and/or perspective). You have published at least 1 piece of your writing (in any genre) in a newspaper, magazine, journal, anthology or professional web publication (excluding personal or self-produced homepages). You have not published more than 1 book, including a chapbook, in any subject or genre with a publisher. If a second book has been accepted by a publisher, but has not been published yet, you are not eligible to apply. Published books or anthologies you have edited do not count towards the maximum. If awarded, you agree to be acknowledged publicly as a lesbian writer and agree to have your work publicized as Astraea sees fit. This may include an announcement or profile in our website and newsletter. All previous finalists, except for first-place winners are eligible to apply. Past judges are excluded. Current staff and board members of the Astraea Foundation are ineligible to apply." Write to [grants@astraeafoundation.org](mailto:grants@astraeafoundation.org) for complete guidelines and application instructions. Each year a new set of judges reviews applications. An independent team of 2 judges in each genre selects the winners anonymously. The names of applicants will not be known to the judges until the decisions are made and all applicants have been notified by mail. All applications will be reviewed by a panel of lesbian writers who will remain

anonymous until after the process has been completed. **DEADLINE:** July 15. Entries may be published or unpublished. Results announced in December. Winners notified by mail.

### LITERAL LATTÉ FICTION AWARD

200 East 10th St. Suite 240, New York NY 10003. (212)260-5532. **E-MAIL:** [litlatte@aol.com](mailto:litlatte@aol.com). **WEBSITE:** [www.literal-latte.com](http://www.literal-latte.com). **CONTACT:** Edward Estlin, contributing editor. Award "to provide talented writers with 3 essential tools for continued success: money, publication and recognition." **PRIZE:** \$1,000 and publication in *Literal Latte* (first prize), \$300 (second prize), \$200 (third prize), up to 7 honorable mentions. **ENTRY FEE:** \$10/story. **GUIDELINES:** Offered annually for unpublished fiction. Open to any writer. Guidelines available for SASE, by e-mail or on website. Entries must be unpublished. Length: 8,000 words maximum. Judged by the editors. Accepts inquiries by e-mail or on website. **DEADLINE:** January 15. Winners notified by phone. List of winners available in late April for SASE or by e-mail.

### WALTER RUMSEY MARVIN GRANT

274 E. First Ave., Suite 300, Columbus OH 43201. (614)466-3831. **FAX:** (614)728-6974. **E-MAIL:** [ohioana@ohioana.org](mailto:ohioana@ohioana.org). **WEBSITE:** [www.ohioana.org](http://www.ohioana.org). **CONTACT:** Linda Hengst. Award "to encourage young, unpublished writers 30 years of age or younger." Competition for short stories. **PRIZE:** \$1,000. **ENTRY FEE:** None. **GUIDELINES:** Entries must be unpublished. Open to unpublished authors born in Ohio or who have lived in Ohio for a minimum of 5 years. Must be 30 years of age or younger. Up to 6 pieces of prose may be submitted; maximum 60 pages, minimum 10 pages double-spaced, 12-pt type. Guidelines for SASE or on website. **DEADLINE:** January 31. Winner notified in May or June. Award given in October.

### DAVID NATHAN MEYERSON PRIZE FOR FICTION

Southwest Review, P.O. Box 750374, Dallas TX 75275-0374. (214)768-1037. **FAX:** (214)768-1408. **E-MAIL:** [swr@smu.edu](mailto:swr@smu.edu); [tlewers@smu.edu](mailto:tlewers@smu.edu). **WEBSITE:** [www.smu.edu/southwestreview](http://www.smu.edu/southwestreview). **CONTACT:** Jennifer Cranfill, senior

editor. **PRIZE:** \$1,000 and publication in the *Southwest Review*. **ENTRY FEE:** \$25. **GUIDELINES:** Open to writers who have not yet published a first book of fiction. Submissions must be no longer than 8,000 words. Work should be printed without the author's name. Name and address should appear only on the cover letter. Submissions will not be returned. **DEADLINE:** May 1. Winner announced in August. For notification of the winning submission, include a SASE.

### A MIDSUMMER TALE

**E-MAIL:** editors@toasted-cheese.com; amtsummer10@toasted-cheese.com. **WEBSITE:** www.toasted-cheese.com. A Midsummer Tale is a summer-themed creative nonfiction contest. Topic changes each year. **PRIZE:** First: \$20 Amazon gift certificate, publication; second: \$15 Amazon gift certificate, publication; third: \$10 Amazon gift certificate, publication. Some feedback is often given to entrants. **ENTRY FEE:** None. **GUIDELINES:** Categories: creative nonfiction. Guidelines are available May 1 on website. Open to any writer. Judged by 2 *Toasted Cheese* editors who blind-judge each contest. Each judge has her own criteria for selecting winners. Send entries to: amtcontest10@toasted-cheese.com with the subject line: A Midsummer Tale Contest Entry. Stories must be about something that took place during the warm months of the year. The word range is 3,000–5,000 words. Check website for current focus and word limit. “We usually receive around 20 entries.” Accepts inquiries by e-mail. **DEADLINE:** June 21. Entries must be unpublished. Results announced July 31 on website. Winners notified by e-mail.

### MILKWEED EDITIONS NATIONAL FICTION PRIZE

1011 Washington Ave. S., Suite 300, Minneapolis MN 55415. (612)332-3192. **FAX:** (612)215-2550. **E-MAIL:** editor@milkweed.org. **WEBSITE:** www.milkweed.org. **CONTACT:** The editors. Annual award for unpublished works. “Looking for a novel, novella or a collection of short stories.” **PRIZE:** Publication by Milkweed Editions and a cash advance of \$5,000 against royalties agreed upon in the contractual arrangement negotiated at the time of acceptance. **ENTRY FEE:** None. **GUIDELINES:**

Manuscripts should be of high literary quality and must be double-spaced and between 150–400 pages in length. Milkweed Editions prefers submissions through its online submissions manager. Winner will be chosen from the mss Milkweed accepts for publication each year. All mss submitted to Milkweed will automatically be considered for the prize. Submission directly to the contest is no longer necessary. Must be written in English. Judged by Milkweed Editions. Catalog available on request for \$1.50. Guidelines for SASE or online. **DEADLINE:** Rolling. Entries must be unpublished. Previous winners: *The Father Shore*, by Matthew Eck; *Visigoth*, by Gary Amdahl; *Crossing Bully Creek*, by Margaret Erhart; *Ordinary Wolves*, by Seth Kantner; *Roofwalker*, by Susan Power—“this is the caliber of fiction we are searching for.” Winners are notified by phone.

### MILLION WRITERS AWARD

5603B W. Friendly Ave., Suite 282, Greensboro NC 27410. **E-MAIL:** editors@storysouth.com. **WEBSITE:** www.storysouth.com. **CONTACT:** Jason Sanford, editor emeritus. Contest “to honor and promote the best fiction published annually in online journals and magazines. The reason for the Million Writers Award is that most of the major literary prizes for short fiction (such as the O. Henry Awards) ignore Web-published fiction. This award aims to show that world-class fiction is being published online and to promote this fiction to the larger reading and literary community.” **PRIZE:** Cash prize and publicity for the author and story. Categories: short stories. Judged by *StorySouth* judges. **ENTRY FEE:** None. **GUIDELINES:** All stories must be 1,000 words or longer. Open to any writer. Cover letter should include e-mail address, word count, title and publication where story was previously published. Guidelines available in winter on website. **DEADLINE:** Varies. Entries must be previously published. Results announced in spring on website. Winners notified by e-mail.

### NATIONAL WRITERS ASSOCIATION NOVEL WRITING CONTEST

10940 S. Parker Rd #508, Parker CO 80134. (303)841-0246. **FAX:** (303)841-2607. **E-MAIL:** anitaedits@aol.com;

natlwritersassn@hotmail.com. **WEBSITE:** www.nationalwriters.com. **CONTACT:** Sandy Whelchel, director. Annual contest “to help develop creative skills, to recognize and reward outstanding ability and to increase the opportunity for the marketing and subsequent publication of novel manuscripts.” **PRIZE:** First place: \$500; second place: \$300; third place: \$200. **ENTRY FEE:** \$35. **GUIDELINES:** Categories: open to any genre or category. Judged by editors and agents. Judges’ evaluation sheets sent to each entry with SASE. Entries must be unpublished. Length: 20,000–100,000 words. Open to any writer. Entry form and information available on benefits section of website. **DEADLINE:** April 1. Opens December 1.

### NELLIGAN PRIZE FOR SHORT FICTION

9105 Campus Delivery, Dept of English, Colorado State University, Fort Collins CO 80523-9105. (970)491-5449. **E-MAIL:** creview@colostate.edu. **WEBSITE:** coloradoreview.colostate.edu. **CONTACT:** Stephanie G’Schwind, editor/director. “The Nelligan Prize for Short Fiction was established in memory of Liza Nelligan, a writer, editor and friend of many in Colorado State University’s English Department, where she received her master’s

degree in literature in 1992. By giving an award to the author of an outstanding short story each year, we hope to honor Liza Nelligan’s life, her passion for writing and her love of fiction.” Annual. **PRIZE:** \$1,500 plus publication in *Colorado Review*. **ENTRY FEE:** \$15. Send credit card information or make checks payable to *Colorado Review*. Payment also accepted via PayPal link from website. **GUIDELINES:** Competition/award for short stories. Entries must be unpublished and less than 50 pages. Anyone may enter contest. All entries are read blind by *Colorado Review*’s editorial staff. 15 entries are selected to be sent on to a final judge. Cover letter should include name, address, phone, e-mail and novel/story title. “Authors should provide 2 cover sheets: 1 with name, address, phone, e-mail and title of story, and a second with only the title of the story. Manuscripts are read ‘blind,’ so authors’ names should not appear anywhere else in the manuscript.” Writers may submit own work. “Successful short story writers are those who are reading contemporary short fiction (short story collections, literary magazines, annual prize anthologies), reading about the craft and actively engaging in the practice of writing.” Accepts inquiries by e-mail, phone. Receives approximately 900 stories. **DEADLINE:**

### USE SETTING AS STORY

Does it matter where your story unfolds? Not only is the answer yes, it’s true in far more ways than you may have previously considered. It matters, for example, if you want to use your setting to help reveal your characters and plot. Think about what Hogwarts reveals about Harry Potter and his friends and their story, what Africa reveals about *The Poisonwood Bible*’s multiple narrators and their stories, even what a largely unnamed suburbia reveals for Rick Moody’s or Ann Beattie’s characters and plots. And it also matters if you want to make an immediate connection with your reader, immersing her at once in your story’s particular universe.

When creating a vivid palette, it’s important to choose details that are right for your particular story. Here, for example, is Scout Finch in the opening pages of Harper Lee’s classic *To Kill a Mockingbird*:

Maycomb was an old town, but it was a tired old town when I first knew it. In rainy weather the streets turned to red slop; grass grew on the sidewalks, the courthouse sagged in the square. Somehow, it was hotter, then: a black dog suffered on a summer’s day; bony mules hitched to Hoover carts flicked flies in the sweltering shade of the live oaks on the square. Men’s stiff collars wilted by nine in the morning. Ladies bathed before noon, after their three-o’clock naps, and by nightfall were like soft teacakes with frostings of sweat and sweet talcum.

In this brief paragraph, Lee use 1) accuracy, 2) originality and 3) telling details to immerse us in her world and the story—and the result is an intrigued reader.

—Excerpted from *The Mind of Your Story* by Lisa Lenard-Cook





March 12, 2011. Results announced in July of each year. Winners notified by phone. Results made available to entrants with SASE.

### NEW LETTERS LITERARY AWARDS

5101 Rockhill Rd., Kansas City MO 64110-2499. (816)235-1168. **FAX:** (816)235-2611. **E-MAIL:** [newletters@umkc.edu](mailto:newletters@umkc.edu). Award to “find and reward good writing from writers who need the recognition and support.” **PRIZE:** First place: \$1,500, plus publication; all entries are considered for publication. Judged by 2 rounds of regional writers (preliminary judging). **ENTRY FEE:** \$15/entry (includes year’s subscription). Make checks payable to *New Letters* or send credit card information. **GUIDELINES:** Guidelines available in January for SASE, e-mail, or on website. Award has 3 categories (fiction, poetry and creative nonfiction) with 1 winner in each. Offered annually for previously unpublished work. Entries must be unpublished. Open to any writer. Cover letter should include name, address, phone, e-mail and title. Winners picked by an anonymous judge of national repute. **DEADLINE:** May 18. Results announced

in September. Winners notified by phone. For contest results, send SASE, e-mail or visit website.

### NEW MILLENNIUM WRITING AWARDS

Room M2, P.O. Box 2463, Knoxville TN 37901. (423)428-0389. **FAX:** (865)428-2302. **E-MAIL:** [DonWilliams7@charter.net](mailto:DonWilliams7@charter.net). **WEBSITE:** [www.newmillenniumwritings.com/awards.html](http://www.newmillenniumwritings.com/awards.html). **CONTACT:** Don Williams, editor. Award “to promote literary excellence in contemporary fiction.” **PRIZE:** \$1,000 (fiction, poetry, nonfiction and short-short fiction, 1,000 words or fewer); winners published in *NMW* and on website. **ENTRY FEE:** \$17 for each submission. **GUIDELINES:** Offered twice annually for unpublished fiction, poetry, essays or nonfiction prose to encourage new fiction writers, poets and essayists and bring them to the attention of the publishing industry. Entrants receive an issue of *NMW* in which winners appear. Judged by novelists and short story writers. Entries must be unpublished. Biannual competition. Length: 1,000–6,000 words. Guidelines available year round for SASE and on website at [www.writingawards.com](http://www.writingawards.com). “Provide a bold, yet organic opening line, sustain the voice and mood throughout, tell an

### PAY ATTENTION TO LANGUAGE

Telling your good story well often demands a careful examination of the words, the sentences, the paragraphs, the chapters, and how they work together to serve the greater whole. Maybe multiple flashbacks aren’t in keeping with the kind of story you’re telling, with the characters you’re presenting. Maybe less florid writing would showcase the simplicity of your story and its plotline. Removing clumsy writing, however, is always advisable.

Gardner speaks at length on this subject in the art of fiction, stating that clumsy writing removes the reader from the fictional dream as well as undercuts the writer’s authority: “where lumps and infelicities occur in fiction, the sensitive reader shrinks away a little, as we do when an interesting conversationalist picks his nose.”

Gardner’s obvious forms of clumsiness are worth noting:

- Inappropriate or excessive use of the passive voice

- Inappropriate use of introductory phrases containing infinite verbs
- Shifts in diction level or the use of distracting diction
- Lack of sentence variety
- Lack of sentence focus
- Faulty rhythm
- Accidental rhyme
- Needless explanation
- Careless shifts in psychic distance
- Mannered writing

Once you’ve finished your second draft, tuck it away in a drawer for a while, so you can re-read it a few weeks later with thoroughly refreshed eyes. Consider recording your text, then playing it back later, while looking and listening for the story’s flow and sentence rhythm.

—Esther Hershenhorn



entertaining and vital story with a strong ending. *New Millennium Writings* is a forward-looking periodical for writers and lovers of good reading. It is filled with outstanding poetry, fiction, essays and other speculations on subjects both topical and timeless about life in our astonishing times. Our pages brim with prize-winning essays, humor, illustration, writing advice and poetry from writers at all stages of their careers. First-timers find their work displayed alongside such well-known writers as Shel Silverstein, Khaled Hosseini, Ted Kooser, Lucille Clifton, John Updike, Sharyn McCrumb, Lee Smith, Norman Mailer, Madison Smartt Bell and Cormac McCarthy.” **DEADLINE:** November 17 and June 17. Results announced October and April. Winners notified by mail and phone. All entrants will receive a list of winners, plus a copy of the annual anthology. Send letter-sized SASE with entry for list.

#### **(ALICE WOOD MEMORIAL) OHIOANA AWARD FOR CHILDREN’S LITERATURE**

274 E. First Ave., Suite 300, Columbus OH 43201. (614)466-3831. **FAX:** (614)728-6974. **E-MAIL:** ohioana@ohioana.org. **WEBSITE:** www.ohioana.org. **CONTACT:** Linda Hengst, executive director. **PRIZE:** \$1,000. **ENTRY FEE:** None. **GUIDELINES:** Recipient must have been born in Ohio or lived in Ohio at least 5 years. Guidelines for SASE. Accepts inquiries by phone and e-mail. Offered to an author whose body of work has made, and continues to make, a significant contribution to literature for children or young adults through their work as a writer, teacher or administrator and through their community service, interest in children’s literature has been encouraged and children have become involved with reading. Nomination forms for SASE. **DEADLINE:** December 31. Results announced in August or September. Winners notified by letter in May. For contest results, call or e-mail.

#### **ON THE PREMISES CONTEST**

4323 Gingham Court, Alexandria VA 22310. (202) 262-2168. **E-MAIL:** questions@onthepremises.com. **WEBSITE:** www.onthepremises.com. **CONTACT:** Tarl Roger Kudrick or Bethany Granger, co-publishers. “*On the Premises* aims to promote newer and/or relatively

unknown writers who can write what we feel are creative, compelling stories told in effective, uncluttered and evocative prose. Each contest challenges writers to produce a great story based on a broad premise that our editors supply as part of the contest.” Competition/award for short stories. **PRIZE:** First prize is \$140, second prize \$100, third prize \$70, and honorable mentions receive \$25. All prize winners are published in *On the Premises* magazine in HTML and PDF format. **ENTRY FEE:** None. **GUIDELINES:** Submissions are accepted by e-mail only. Check website for exact dates. Entries should be unpublished. Open to everyone. Length: 1,000–5,000. E-mail should include name, address, e-mail, novel/story title, with ms attached. No name or contact info should be in ms. Writers may submit own work. Entries are judged blindly by a panel of judges with professional editing and writing experience. “Write something compelling, creative and well-crafted. Above all, clearly use the contest premise. Results announced within 2 weeks of contest deadline. Winners notified via newsletter and with publication of *On the Premises*. Results made available to entrants on website and in publication. **DEADLINE:** See website. Contests held every 4 months.

#### **PEARL SHORT STORY PRIZE**

3030 E. Second St., Long Beach CA 90803-5163. (562)434-4523. **E-MAIL:** Pearlmag@aol.com. **WEBSITE:** www.pearlmag.com. **CONTACT:** Marilyn Johnson, fiction editor. Award to “provide a larger forum and help widen publishing opportunities for fiction writers in the small press and to help support the continuing publication of *Pearl*.” **PRIZE:** \$250, publication in *Pearl* and 10 copies of the journal. **ENTRY FEE:** \$10/story. **GUIDELINES:** Open to any writer. Guidelines for SASE or on website. Include a brief bio and SASE for reply or return of mss. Entries must be unpublished. “Although we are open to all types of fiction, we look most favorably on coherent, well-crafted narratives containing interesting, believable characters in meaningful situations.” Length: 4,000 words or fewer. Accepts queries by e-mail or fax. Accepts simultaneous submissions, but asks to be notified if story is accepted elsewhere. Judged by the editors of *Pearl*: Marilyn Johnson, Joan Jobe Smith, Barbara Hauk. **DEADLINE:** April 1–May 31 (postmark). Results

announced in September. Winners notified by mail. For contest results, send SASE, e-mail or visit website.

### **KATHERINE ANNE PORTER PRIZE IN SHORT FICTION**

1155 Union Cir., #311336, Denton TX 76203-5017. (940)565-2142. **FAX:** (940)565-4590. **E-MAIL:** karen.devinney@unt.edu. **WEBSITE:** web3.unt.edu/untpress. **CONTACT:** Laura Kopchick, Univ. of Texas at Arlington. Contest is offered annually. Prize is awarded to a collection of short fiction.” **PRIZE:** \$1,000 and publication by University of North Texas Press (standard author contract). **ENTRY FEE:** \$25. **GUIDELINES:** See website. All entries should contain identifying material *only* on the 1 cover sheet. Entries are read anonymously. Entries may include both unpublished and previously published stories, but collection as a whole has to be previously unpublished. In years when the judge is announced, we ask that students of the judge not enter to avoid a perceived conflict. Judged by a different eminent writer each year. Some prefer to remain anonymous until conclusion of contest. **DEADLINE:** postmarked May 1–June 30.

### **PRAIRIE SCHOONER BOOK PRIZE SERIES**

201 Andrews Hall, P.O. Box 880334, Lincoln NE 68588-0334. **WEBSITE:** prairieschooner.unl.edu. **CONTACT:** “Attn: Fiction.” Annual. Competition/award for story collections. **PRIZE:** \$3,000 and publication through the University of Nebraska Press for 1 book of short fiction and 1 book of poetry. **ENTRY FEE:** \$25. Make checks payable to *Prairie Schooner*. **GUIDELINES:** Entries should be unpublished. Send full manuscript (the author’s name should not appear anywhere on the ms). Send 2 cover pages: 1 listing only the title of the ms, and the other listing the title, author’s name, address, telephone number and e-mail address. Send SASE for notification of results. All mss will be recycled. You may also send an optional SAS postcard for confirmation of receipt of ms. **DEADLINE:** Submissions are accepted January 15–March 15; check website for updates. Winners notified by phone or e-mail. Results made available to entrants on website and in publication.

### **PUSHCART PRIZE**

P.O. Box 380, Wainscott NY 11975. (516)324-9300. **WEBSITE:** www.pushcartprize.com. **CONTACT:** Bill Henderson, president. Award to “publish and recognize the best of small press literary work.” **PRIZE:** Publigories: short stories, poetry, essays on any subject. **ENTRY FEE:** None. **GUIDELINES:** cation in *Pushcart Best of the Small Presses* anthology. CatEntries must be previously published. Must have been published during the current calendar year. Open to any writer. Nomination by small press publishers/editors only. **DEADLINE:** December 1.

### **THE SCARS EDITOR’S CHOICE AWARDS**

829 Brian Court, Gurnee IL 60031-3155. **E-MAIL:** editor@scars.tv. **WEBSITE:** scars.tv. **CONTACT:** Janet Kuypers, editor/publisher. Award “to showcase good writing in an annual book.” **PRIZE:** publication of story/essay and 1 copy of the book. **ENTRY FEE:** \$18/entry. **GUIDELINES:** Categories: short stories. For contest results, send SASE or e-mail or look at the contest page at website. Entries may be unpublished or previously published. Open to any writer. For guidelines, visit website. Accepts inquiries by e-mail. Length: “We appreciate shorter works. Shorter stories, more vivid and more real storylines in writing have a good chance.” **DEADLINE:** Revolves for appearing in different upcoming books as winners. Results announced at book publication, online. Winners notified by mail when book is printed.

### **A. DAVID SCHWARTZ FICTION PRIZE**

Dept. of English; University of Wisconsin–Milwaukee, Milwaukee WI 53201. (414)229-4708. **E-MAIL:** info@creamcityreview.org. **WEBSITE:** www.creamcityreview.org. **CONTACT:** Jay P. Johnson, editor-in-chief. Purpose: “to recognize what the judge determines to be the most original, well-crafted work of previously unpublished short fiction. We are devoted to publishing memorable and energetic fiction, poetry and creative nonfiction by new and established writers. *Cream City Review* is particularly interested in publishing new voices; our reputation and long publishing history attracts well-known writers, often leading to unpublished writers appearing next to poet laureates. Our contest is open to all

writers in all places, so long as the work is in English, original and previously unpublished.” Annual. **PRIZE:** \$1,000 plus publication in *Cream City Review*. Receives 50–250 entries. **ENTRY FEE:** \$15. Fee includes the award-winners issue. Make checks payable to *Cream City Review*. **GUIDELINES:** Guidelines available on website. Anyone may enter contest. Length: A work of more than 30 pages would have to be particularly impressive. Cover letter should include name, address, phone, e-mail, novel/story title. Also include on first page of ms. Writers may submit own work. “See aesthetic statement; read previous issues of *Cream City Review* to gain an understanding of the work we are interested in publishing; familiarize yourself with the work of the judge.” Entries are judged by guest judges. **DEADLINE:** Early December. Results announced at time of publication (April/May). Winners notified by e-mail. Winners announced February/March. Results made available to entrants with SASE, on website.

### SKIPPING STONES HONOR BOOK AWARDS

P.O. Box 3939, Eugene OR 97403-0939. (541)342-4956. **E-MAIL:** editor@skippingstones.org. **WEBSITE:** www.skippingstones.org. **CONTACT:** Arun N. Toké. Annual awards since 1994 to “promote multicultural and/or nature awareness through creative writings for children and teens and their educators.” **PRIZE:** honor certificates, seals, reviews, press release/publicity. **ENTRY FEE:** \$50. **GUIDELINES:** Guidelines for SASE or e-mail and on website. Categories: short stories, novels, story collections, poetry and nonfiction. Judged by “a multicultural committee of teachers, librarians, parents, students and editors.” Entries must be previously published. Open to published books and teaching resources that appeared in print during a 2-year period prior to the deadline date. Accepts inquiries by e-mail, fax, phone. “We seek authentic, exceptional, child/youth friendly books that promote intercultural, international, intergenerational harmony and understanding through creative ways. Writings that come out of your own experiences and cultural understanding seem to have an edge.” **DEADLINE:** February 1. Results announced in May each year. Winners notified through personal notifications, press release and by publishing reviews of winning titles

in the summer issue. Attractive gold honor seals available for winners. For contest results, send SASE, e-mail or visit website.

### SKIPPING STONES YOUTH AWARDS

P.O. Box 3939, Eugene OR 97403-0939. **PHONE/FAX:** (541)342-4956. **E-MAIL:** editor@skippingstones.org. **WEBSITE:** www.skippingstones.org. **CONTACT:** Arun N. Toké. Annual awards to “promote creativity as well as multicultural and nature awareness in youth.” **PRIZE:** Publication in the autumn issue, honor certificate, subscription to magazine, plus 5 multicultural or nature books. **ENTRY FEE:** \$3/entry, make checks payable to *Skipping Stones*. **GUIDELINES:** Categories: short stories. Entries must be unpublished. Length: 1,000 words maximum. Open to any writer ages 7–17. Guidelines available by SASE, e-mail or on website. Accepts inquiries by e-mail or phone. “Be creative. Do not use stereotypes or excessive violent language or plots. Be sensitive to cultural diversity.” Cover letter should include name, address, phone and e-mail. **DEADLINE:** June 20. Results announced in the September/October issue. Winners notified by mail. For contest results, visit website. Everyone who enters receives the issue which features the award winners.

### KAY SNOW WRITING AWARDS

9045 SW Barbur Blvd., Suite 5A, Portland OR 97219. (503)452-1592. **E-MAIL:** wilwrite@teleport.com. **WEBSITE:** www.willamettewriters.com. **CONTACT:** Pat MacAodha. Contest offered annually to “offer encouragement and recognition to writers with unpublished submissions.” **PRIZE:** First place: \$300; second place: \$150; third place: \$50; excerpts published in Willamette Writers newsletter, and winners acknowledged at banquet during writing conference. Student writers win \$50 in categories for grades 1–5, 6–8 and 9–12. \$500 Liam Callen Memorial Award goes to best overall entry. Prize winners will be honored at the 2-day August Willamette Writers’ Conference. Press releases will be sent to local and national media announcing the winners, and excerpts from winning entries may appear in our newsletter. **ENTRY FEE:** \$15 fee; no fee for student writers. **GUIDELINES:** Guidelines for #10 SASE, fax, by e-mail or on website. Acquires right to publish



**SHOW, DON'T TELL**

The most effective writing—regardless of POV—lets the reader see things through the eyes of the characters instead of the eyes of the author or omniscient narrator.

He was tall, 6 foot 2, with a nose to match, tall, thin and straight.

That's the author talking. Instead, try this:

He caught sight of his 6-foot-2 reflection in the window of a bagel shop, paused and studied his thin, straight nose, both in profile and straight on. Straight on, he decided, always show his nose to her straight on. Never from the side.

This approach provides the same facts without stopping the story as if to say, "I'm going to describe somebody now." We see the reflection through the character's eyes, not the author's keyboard. We see action, both actual and implied. Plus, we learn something about the character's personality. He's vain about the nose.

Here's another example of seeing through a character's eyes. In this brief scene only the characters do the talking.

"You've got a stiff neck or something?" she asked.

"No—why?"

"You keep turning your body instead of your head when you look at me."

The characters describe the action to each other; it's entirely between quote marks. The author stays out of the picture and lets the characters react to each other and to events. You do your best writing when the people in the story make things happen. Naturally, there's nothing wrong with narration. But when you reveal information this way, nobody, neither an author nor a narrator, interprets for the reader. Instead the reader interprets on her own.

—Excerpted from *The Writer's Little Helper*  
by James V. Smith

excerpts from winning pieces 1 time in their newsletter. Accepts inquiries by fax, phone and e-mail. **DEADLINE:** April 23. Winners notified by mail and phone. For contest results, send SASE.

**SOUTH DAKOTA ARTS COUNCIL**

711 E. Wells Ave., Pierre SD 57501-3369. (605)773-3301. **E-MAIL:** [sdac@state.sd.us](mailto:sdac@state.sd.us). **WEBSITE:** [www.artscouncil.sd.gov](http://www.artscouncil.sd.gov). **CONTACT:** Michael Pangburn, executive director. "Artist Fellowships (\$5,000), Artist Project Grants (\$1,000–2,000) and Artist Collaboration Grants (up to \$6,000) are planned for fiscal 2011." **ENTRY FEE:** None. **GUIDELINES:** Open to South Dakota residents only. Students pursuing an undergraduate or graduate degree are ineligible. Guidelines and application available on website only. Applicants must submit signature page through the mail. All other materials are submitted online through an e-grant system. Application materials include current résumé no longer than 5 pages; appropriate samples of artistic work (see guidelines); up to 5 pages additional documentation; SASE with adequate postage for return of ms (if desired). **DEADLINE:** March 1.

**SOUTHWEST WRITERS (SWW) CONTESTS**

3721 Morris St. NE, Suite A, Albuquerque NM 87111-3611. (505)265-9485. **E-MAIL:** [Swwriters@juno.com](mailto:Swwriters@juno.com). **WEBSITE:** [www.southwestwriters.org](http://www.southwestwriters.org). **CONTACT:** Contest chair. The SouthWest Writers (SWW) Contest encourages and honors excellence in writing. **PRIZE:** First, second and third place winners in each category also receive cash prizes of \$150, \$100 and \$50 (respectively), as well as a certificate of achievement. First place winners also compete for the \$1,000 Storyteller Award. Winners will be honored at a contest awards banquet (date and time TBA). **ENTRY FEE:** Early deadline without critique, \$20 for members; \$30 for nonmembers; poetry \$10 for first poem, \$5 for each additional poem; late deadline, an additional \$5. Early deadline with critique, \$45 for members; \$55 for nonmembers; late deadline, an additional \$5. Pay by cash, check (made out to SouthWest Writers), money order or credit card. No cover letter is required; send copy of the SWW Contest Entry Form. **GUIDELINES:** Guidelines available in January by

SASE, e-mail, on website or in SouthWest Sage SWW newsletter. Categories: mainstream/literary novel, mystery/suspense/thriller/adventure novel, science fiction/fantasy/horror novel, historical novel, middle grade or YA novel, memoir book, memoir article, mainstream/literary article, nonfiction essay/article, personal essay/column, nonfiction book, children's fiction or nonfiction picture book, screenplay, poetry. Judged by editors and agents (most from New York publishing houses) who are chosen by the contest chairs. Screening panel sends top 15 entries in each category to judges. Judges rank and critique the top 3 entries in each category. All entries may receive an optional written critique by a qualified consultant. Personal information should not appear anywhere on ms. Please follow detailed instructions for submission in "Category Specific Guidelines" on website. Entries must be unpublished. Open to all writers from around the world. All entries should be submitted in English and follow standard ms format. "Entrants should read the SWW Contest Rules for complete information on the SWW website." Accepts inquiries by e-mail, phone. Mail SASE to receive rules, entry form in hard copy. Do not use certified mail to send submissions as they will be returned unopened; enclose an SAS postcard to verify receipt. **DEADLINE:** May 1; late deadline: May 15. Finalists in all categories are notified by mail and are listed on the SWW website with the title of their entry.

### SPUR AWARDS

1080 Mesa Vista Hall MSC06 3770, 1 University of New Mexico, Albuquerque NM 87131. (615)791-1444. **E-MAIL:** [wwa@unm.edu](mailto:wwa@unm.edu). **WEBSITE:** [www.westernwriters.org](http://www.westernwriters.org). **CONTACT:** Awards coordinator. Purpose of award is "to reward quality in the fields of Western fiction and nonfiction." **PRIZE:** Trophy. Categories: short stories, novels, poetry, songs, scripts and nonfiction. **ENTRY FEE:** None. **GUIDELINES:** Entries must be published during the contest year. Open to any writer. Guidelines available in Sept/Oct for SASE, on website or by phone. Inquiries accepted by e-mail or phone. **DEADLINE:** January 10. Results announced annually in summer. Winners notified by mail. For contest results, send SASE.

### THEODORE STURGEON MEMORIAL AWARD FOR BEST SHORT SF OF THE YEAR

English Department, University of Kansas, Lawrence KS 66045. (785)864-3380. **FAX:** (785)864-1159. **E-MAIL:** [jgunn@ku.edu](mailto:jgunn@ku.edu). **WEBSITE:** [www.ku.edu/~sfcenter](http://www.ku.edu/~sfcenter). **CONTACT:** James Gunn, professor and director. Award to "honor the best science fiction short story of the year." **PRIZE:** Trophy. Winners receive expense-paid trip to the University and have their names engraved on permanent trophy. Categories: short stories. Judged by jury. **ENTRY FEE:** None. Entries must be previously published. Guidelines available in December by phone, e-mail or on website. Accepts inquiries by e-mail and fax. Entrants for the Sturgeon Award are by nomination only. Results announced in July. For contest results, send SASE.

### WABASH PRIZE FOR FICTION

Department of English, 500 Oval Dr., Purdue University, West Lafayette IN 47907. **E-MAIL:** [sycamore@purdue.edu](mailto:sycamore@purdue.edu). **WEBSITE:** [www.sycamorereview.com](http://www.sycamorereview.com). **CONTACT:** Mehdi Okasi, editor-in-chief. **PRIZE:** \$1,000 and publication in *Sycamore Review*. **ENTRY FEE:** Contact for information. **GUIDELINES:** Submit 1 short story (maximum 10,000 words). No identifying information should appear on the manuscript. Include cover letter with all identifying information along with a word count. Include SASE to receive notification of the winner and check made payable to *Sycamore Review* for entry. **DEADLINE:** See website.

### THE ROBERT WATSON LITERARY PRIZE IN FICTION AND POETRY

3302 Hall for Humanities, UNCG, P.O. Box 26170, Greensboro NC 27402-6170. (336)334-5459. **E-MAIL:** [jlclark@uncg.edu](mailto:jlclark@uncg.edu). **WEBSITE:** [www.greensbororeview.org](http://www.greensbororeview.org). **CONTACT:** Jim Clark, editor. Offered annually for fiction (7,500 word limit) and poetry (3–5 poems). Sample issue for \$8. **PRIZE:** \$1,000 each for best short story and poem. **ENTRY FEE:** \$14. **GUIDELINES:** Entries must be unpublished. No submissions by e-mail. Open to any writer. Guidelines for SASE or on website. Judged by editors of *The Greensboro Review*. All manuscripts meeting literary award guidelines will be considered for

cash award as well as for publication in the spring issue of *The Greensboro Review*.” **DEADLINE:** September 15. Winners notified by mail, phone or e-mail. List of winners published in spring issue. “

### WRITERS' JOURNAL ANNUAL FICTION CONTEST

P.O. Box 394, Perham MN 56573. (218)346-7921. **FAX:** (218)346-7924. **E-MAIL:** [writersjournal@writersjournal.com](mailto:writersjournal@writersjournal.com). **WEBSITE:** [www.writersjournal.com](http://www.writersjournal.com). **CONTACT:** Leon Ogroske, editor ([editor@writersjournal.com](mailto:editor@writersjournal.com)). **PRIZE:** First place: \$500; second place: \$200; third place: \$100, plus honorable mentions. Prize-winning stories and selected honorable mentions published in *WRITERS' Journal* July/August issue. **ENTRY FEE:** \$15. **GUIDELINES:** Offered annually for previously unpublished fiction up to 5,000 words. Open to any writer. Guidelines and entry forms available for SASE and on website. Accepts inquiries by fax, e-mail and phone. “Writer’s name must not appear on submission. A separate cover sheet must include name of contest, title, word count and writer’s name, address, phone and e-mail (if available).” Receives fewer than 350 entries. **DEADLINE:** January 30. Results announced in July/August. Winners notified by mail. A list of winners is published in July/August issue and posted on website.

### WRITERS' JOURNAL ANNUAL ROMANCE CONTEST

P.O. Box 394, Perham MN 56573. (218)346-7921. **FAX:** (218)346-7924. **E-MAIL:** [writersjournal@writersjournal.com](mailto:writersjournal@writersjournal.com). **WEBSITE:** [www.writersjournal.com](http://www.writersjournal.com). **CONTACT:** Leon Ogroske, editor. Offered annually for previously unpublished works. Open to any writer. **PRIZE:** First place: \$250; second place: \$100; third place: \$50, plus honorable mentions. Prize-winning stories and selected honorable mentions published in *WRITERS' Journal*. **ENTRY FEE:** \$7. **GUIDELINES:** No limit on entries per person. Guidelines for SASE, by fax, phone, e-mail, on website and in publication. Accepts inquiries by fax, e-mail, phone. Open to any writer. Cover letter should include name, address, phone, e-mail, word count and

title; just title on ms. **DEADLINE:** July 30. 2,000 words maximum. Results announced in January/February issue. Winners notified by mail. Winners list published in *WRITERS' Journal* and on website. Enclose SASE for winner’s list. Receives fewer than 150 entries.

### WRITERS' JOURNAL ANNUAL SCIENCE FICTION/FANTASY CONTEST

P.O. Box 394, Perham MN 56573. (218)346-7921. **FAX:** (218)346-7924. **E-MAIL:** [writersjournal@writersjournal.com](mailto:writersjournal@writersjournal.com). **WEBSITE:** [www.writersjournal.com](http://www.writersjournal.com). **CONTACT:** Leon Ogroske, editor. Annual contest for previously unpublished fiction up to 2,000 words. Open to any writer. **PRIZE:** First place: \$250; second place: \$100; third place: \$50, plus honorable mentions. Prize-winning stories and selected honorable mentions published in *WRITERS' Journal*. **ENTRY FEE:** \$7. **GUIDELINES:** Guidelines available for SASE and on website. Accepts inquiries by fax, e-mail and phone. Writer’s name must not appear on submission. A separate cover sheet must include name of contest, title, word count and writer’s name, address, phone and e-mail (if available).” **DEADLINE:** November 30. Results announced in May/June. Winners notified by mail.

### ZOETROPE SHORT STORY CONTEST

916 Kearny St., San Francisco CA 94133. (415)788-7500. **E-MAIL:** [contests@all-story.com](mailto:contests@all-story.com). **WEBSITE:** [www.all-story.com](http://www.all-story.com). **FAX:** (415) 989-7910. **CONTACT:** Krista Halverson, managing editor. Annual contest for unpublished short stories. **PRIZE:** First place: \$1,000; second place: \$500, third place: \$250; plus 7 honorable mentions. The winning story will be published at the website as a special supplement to the spring issue. **ENTRY FEE:** \$15. **GUIDELINES:** Guidelines for SASE, by e-mail, in publication or on website. Entries must be unpublished. Word length: 5,000 words maximum. Open to any writer. “Please mark envelope clearly ‘short fiction contest.’” For details, please visit the website this summer or email us. **DEADLINE:** October 1. Winners notified by phone or e-mail December 1. A list of winners are posted on website and listed in spring issue. 🏆

JENNIFER BENNER is the assistant editor of *Writing Contests*.

## CHILDREN'S WRITING CONTESTS & AWARDS

*Here are 45 competitions for writers of young adult,  
middle grade, picture books and more.*

Can you remember the first book you pulled off the shelf again and again—the one that made you love to read (or be read to, if your memory goes back that far)? Chances are you can—and that's a testament to the power of children's literature. If you're a writer of children's work and want to try writing's side door to success, throw your hat in the ring by entering a contest. Winning or placing high in a contest can gain you valuable public attention for your work. Grants offered by large writing organizations can also offer monetary recognition to writers—giving them more financial freedom as they work on projects.

On the following pages, you will find complete listings for 45 contests and awards for writers of children's fiction and nonfiction. You will also find several contests that are specifically designed for kid writers—requesting submissions from students of various ages. These contests offer you the opportunity for your work to be judged on the basis of quality alone without the outside factors (like budgets, trends and the marketplace) that sometimes influence publishing decisions. Some focus on form, such as picture books, middle grade stories or a young adult novel, while others feature writing on particular themes or topics (such as multicultural stories). Chances are, no matter what type of children's fiction or nonfiction you write, there is a contest or award program that may be a good match for you.

The submission details of the contests listed here are as varied as the books on a bookstore shelf, so pay close attention each listing's guidelines, so you give your work the best shot possible. Good luck!

### ABBREVIATIONS

**ISBN:** Industry standard book number **MS.:** Manuscript **MSS.:** Manuscripts **SAS:** Self addressed stamped (as in postcard) **SASE:** Self addressed stamped envelope **TBA:** To be announced



**AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF UNIVERSITY WOMEN, NORTH CAROLINA DIVISION, AWARD IN JUVENILE LITERATURE**

4610 Mail Service Center, Raleigh NC 27699-4610. **CONTACT:** Mr. Michael Hill. Annual award. Purpose of award: to recognize the year's best work of juvenile literature by a North Carolina resident. **PRIZE:** A cup to the winner and winner's name inscribed on a plaque displayed within the North Carolina Office of Archives and History. **ENTRY FEE:** None. Judging by Board of Award selected by sponsoring organization. **GUIDELINES:** Author must have maintained either legal residence or actual physical residence, or a combination of both, in the state of North Carolina for 3 years immediately preceding the close of the contest period. Only published work (books) are eligible. Book must be published during the year ending June 30. Submissions made by author, author's agent or publisher. SASE for contest rules. **DEADLINE:** July 15.

**AMERICAS AWARD**

CLASP Committee on Teaching and Outreach, c/o Center for Latin American and Caribbean Studies, P.O. Box 413, Milwaukee WI 53201. (414)229-5986. **FAX:** (414)229-2879. **E-MAIL:** jkline@uwm.edu. **WEBSITE:** www4.uwm.edu/clacs/aa/index.cfm. **CONTACT:** Julie Kline. Annual award. Estab. 1993. **PRIZE:** \$500 cash prize, plaque and a formal presentation at the Library of Congress, Washington, DC. **ENTRY FEE:** None. **GUIDELINES:** Visit website or send SASE for contest rules and any committee changes. Up to 2 awards are given each spring in recognition of U.S. published works (from the previous year) of fiction, poetry, folklore or selected nonfiction (from picture books to works for young adults) in English or Spanish which authentically and engagingly relate to Latin America, the Caribbean or to Latinos in the United States. By combining both and linking the "Americas," the intent is to reach beyond geographic borders, as well as multicultural/international boundaries, focusing instead upon cultural heritages within the hemisphere. Previously published submissions only. Submissions open to anyone with an interest in the theme of the award. Judging by a review committee consisting of

individuals in teaching, library work, outreach and children's literature specialists. **DEADLINE:** January 15.

**AUSTIN PUBLIC LIBRARY FRIENDS FOUNDATION AWARDS FOR BEST CHILDREN'S BOOK AND BEST YOUNG ADULT BOOK**

Dallas TX 75225. **WEBSITE:** www.smu.edu/english/creativewriting/The\_Texas\_Institute\_of\_Letters.htm. **CONTACT:** Darwin Payne. **PRIZE:** \$500 for each individual award winner every year. **ENTRY FEE:** None. **GUIDELINES:** See website for information on eligibility, deadlines and the judges' names and addresses to whom the books should be sent Offered annually for work published January 1–December 31 of previous year to recognize the best book for children and young people. Writer must have been born in Texas or have lived in the state for at least 2 consecutive years at 1 time, or the subject matter must be associated with the state. **DEADLINE:** Contact for information.

**THE GEOFFREY BILSON AWARD FOR HISTORICAL FICTION FOR YOUNG PEOPLE**

The Canadian Children's Book Centre, 40 Orchard View Blvd., Suite 101, Toronto ON M4R 1B9 Canada. (416)975-0010. **FAX:** (416)975-8970. **WEBSITE:** www.bookcentre.ca. Created in Geoffrey Bilson's memory in 1988. **PRIZE:** \$5,000. Please visit website for submissions guidelines and eligibility criteria, as well as specific submission deadline. **ENTRY FEE:** Contact for information. **GUIDELINES:** Awarded annually to reward excellence in the writing of an outstanding work of historical fiction for young readers, by a Canadian author, published in the previous calendar year. Open to Canadian citizens and residents of Canada for at least 2 years. **DEADLINE:** mid-December.

**THE IRMA S. AND JAMES H. BLACK BOOK AWARD**

Bank Street College of Education, Broadway and 112th Street, New York NY 10025-1898. (212)875-4458. **FAX:** (212)875-4558. **E-MAIL:** kfreda@bankstreet.edu. **WEBSITE:** www.bankstreet.edu/childrenslibrary/irmasimontonblackhome.html. **CONTACT:** Kristin Freda. Annual award. Estab. 1972. **PRIZE:** A scroll (1 each for the author and

illustrator) with the recipient's name and a gold seal designed by Maurice Sendak are awarded in May." **ENTRY FEE:** None. **GUIDELINES:** "The award is given each spring for a book for young children, published in the previous year, for excellence of both text and illustrations." Entries must have been published during the previous calendar year. "Publishers submit books to us by sending them here to the Bank Street Library. Authors may ask their publishers to submit their books. Out of these, 3–5 books are chosen by a committee of older children and children's literature professionals. These children are the final judges who pick the actual award winner. **DEADLINE:** Mid-December.

### **BONDERMAN BIENNIAL NATIONAL YOUTH THEATRE PLAYWRITING COMPETITION AND DEVELOPMENT WORKSHOP AND SYMPOSIUM**

Bonderman Youth Theatre Playwriting Workshop, Indiana Repertory Theatre, 140 West Washington St., Indianapolis, IN 46204. **E-MAIL:** bonderma@iupui.edu. **WEBSITE:** www.irtlive.com. **CONTACT:** Dorothy Webb. Prize: 4 scripts chosen for workshop; each winner receives \$1000. **PRIZE:** workshop and \$1000. **ENTRY FEE:** None. **GUIDELINES:** Open to professional and non-professional playwrights. Entries not returned. Judging by professional theatre directors, teachers and artists. Requirements for entrants: Contest open only to American playwrights with plays not previously produced professionally and not currently in development with a theatre. **DEADLINE:** (tentative) August 16.

### **ANN CONNOR BRIMER AWARD**

Nova Scotia Library Association, P.O. Box 36036, Halifax NS B3J 3S9 Canada. (902)490-5991. **FAX:** (902)490-5889. **WEBSITE:** nsla.ns.ca/aboutns/brimeraward.html. **CONTACT:** Heather MacKenzie. Annual award. **PRIZE:** \$1,000 and framed certificate. **ENTRY FEE:** None. **GUIDELINES:** SASE for contest rules and entry forms. Given to an author of a children's book who resides in Atlantic Canada. Requirements for entrants: Book must be intended for use up to age 15; in print and readily available; fiction or nonfiction except textbooks. Previously published submissions

only. Submissions made by the author's agent or nominated by a person or group of people. Must be published in previous year. Judging by a selection committee. **DEADLINE:** October 15.

### **CALLIOPE FICTION CONTEST**

Writers' Specialized Interest Group (SIG) of American Mensa, Ltd. 2506 SE Bitterbrush Dr., Madras, OR 97741. **E-MAIL:** cynthia@theriver.com. **WEBSITE:** www.calliopewriters.org. **CONTACT:** Sandy Raschke. Open to students. **PRIZE:** small amount of cash (up to \$75 for first place, to \$10 for third), certificates, full or mini-subscriptions to *Calliope* and various premiums and books, depending on donations. All winners are published in subsequent issues of *Calliope*. **ENTRY FEE:** \$5 for non-subscribers; subscribers get first entry fee. **GUIDELINES:** Unpublished submissions only (all genres, no violence, profanity or extreme horror). Submissions made by author. Judging by fiction editor, with concurrence of other editors if needed. Requirements for entrants: Winners must retain sufficient rights to have their stories published in the January/February issue, or their entries will be disqualified; 1-time rights. Open to all writers. No special considerations—other than following the guidelines. Contest theme, due dates and sometimes entry fees change annually. Always send SASE for complete rules; available after March 15 each year. Sample copies with prior winners are available for \$3. **DEADLINE:** Changes annually.

### **CANADA COUNCIL GOVERNOR GENERAL'S LITERARY AWARDS**

350 Albert St., Ottawa ON K1P 5V8 Canada. (613)566-4410, ext. 5573. **FAX:** (613)566-4410. **E-MAIL:** diane.miljours@canadacouncil.ca. **CONTACT:** Diane Miljours. Annual award. **PRIZE:** \$25,000 to winning authors; \$1,000 to non-winning finalists. **ENTRY FEE:** Contact for information. **GUIDELINES:** Given to the best English-language and best French-language work in each of the 7 categories of fiction, literary nonfiction, poetry, drama, children's literature (text), children's literature (illustration) and translation. Books must be first-edition trade books that have been written, translated or illustrated by Canadian citizens or

permanent residents of Canada. In the case of translation, the original work written in English or French, must also be a Canadian-authored title. English titles must be published between September 1, 2009 and September 30, 2010. Books must be submitted by publishers. **DEADLINE:** Depends on the book's publication date. For books published in English: March 15, June 1 and August 7. For books published in French: March 15 and July 15. The awards ceremony is scheduled mid-November.

### CHILDREN'S AFRICANA BOOK AWARD

c/o Rutgers University, 132 George St., New Brunswick NJ 08901. (732)932-8173. **FAX:** (732)932-3394. **WEBSITE:** [www.africanstudies.org](http://www.africanstudies.org). Administered by Africa Access, P.O. Box 8028, Silver Spring MD 20910. (301)585-9136. **E-MAIL:** [africaaccess@aol.com](mailto:africaaccess@aol.com). **WEBSITE:** [www.africaaccessreview.org](http://www.africaaccessreview.org). **CONTACT:** Brenda Randolph. Estab. 1991. **PRIZE:** Plaque, announcement each spring, reviews published at Africa Access Review website and in *Sankofa: Journal of African Children's & Young Adult Literature*. Judging by Outreach Council of ASA and children's literature scholars. **ENTRY FEE:** None. **GUIDELINES:** "The Children's Africana Book Awards are presented annually to the authors and illustrators of the best books on Africa for children and young people published or republished in the U.S. The awards were created by the Outreach Council of the African Studies Association (ASA) to dispel stereotypes and encourage the publication and use of accurate, balanced children's materials about Africa. The awards are presented in 2 categories: young children and older readers." "Work submitted for awards must be suitable for children ages 4-18; a significant portion of books' content must be about Africa; must be copyrighted in the calendar year prior to award year; must be published or republished in the U.S." **DEADLINE:** Contact for information.

### COLORADO BOOK AWARDS

(303)894-7951, ext. 21. **FAX:** (303)864-9361. **E-MAIL:** [long@coloradohumanities.org](mailto:long@coloradohumanities.org). **CONTACT:** Margaret Coval, exec. dir., or Jennifer Long, prog. adjudicator. **PRIZE:** \$250 per category. **ENTRY FEE:** \$50 fee.

**GUIDELINES:** Offered annually for work published by December of previous year. "The purpose is to champion all Colorado authors, editors, illustrators and photographers, and in particular, to honor the award-winners, raising the profiles of both their work and Colorado as a state whose people promote and support reading, writing and literacy through books. The categories are: children's, young adult and juvenile literature, fiction, genre fiction (romance, mystery/thriller, science fiction/fantasy, historical), biography, history, anthology, poetry, pictorial, graphic novel/comic, creative nonfiction, and general nonfiction, as well as other categories as determined each year. Open to authors who reside or have resided in Colorado." **DEADLINE:** January.

### CRICKET LEAGUE

Cricket League, P.O. Box 300, Peru IL 61354. **E-MAIL:** [mail@cricketmagkids.com](mailto:mail@cricketmagkids.com). **WEBSITE:** [www.cricketmagkids.com/contests](http://www.cricketmagkids.com/contests). **PRIZE:** Certificate suitable for framing and children's books or art/writing supplies. **ENTRY FEE:** None. **GUIDELINES:** Open to all ages. 9 contests per year. Cricket League rules, contest theme and submission deadline information can be found in the current issue of *Cricket* and via website. Unpublished submissions only. "We prefer that children who enter the contests subscribe to the magazine or that they read *Cricket* in their school or library." Judging by *Cricket* editors. Obtains right to print prize-winning entries in magazine and/or on the website. Winning entries are published on the Cricket League pages in a subsequent *Cricket* magazine. "The purpose of Cricket League contests is to encourage creativity and give young people an opportunity to express themselves in writing, drawing, painting or photography. There is a contest in each issue. Possible categories include story, poetry, art or photography. Each contest relates to a specific theme described on each issue's Cricket League page and on the website. Signature verifying originality, age, address of entrant and permission to publish required. Entries which do not relate to the current month's theme cannot be considered." **DEADLINE:** The 25th of the month.

## DOROTHY CANFIELD FISHER CHILDREN'S BOOK AWARD

Vermont Department of Libraries, Northeast Regional Library, 109 State St., Montpelier VT 05609. (802)828-6954. **E-MAIL:** [grace.greene@state.vt.us](mailto:grace.greene@state.vt.us). **WEBSITE:** [www.dcfaward.org](http://www.dcfaward.org). **CONTACT:** Mary Linney. **PRIZE:** A scroll presented to the winning author at an award ceremony. **ENTRY FEE:** None. **GUIDELINES:** Requirements for entrants: "Titles must be original work, published in the U.S. and be appropriate to children in grades 4–8. The book must be copyrighted in the current year. It must be written by an American or a Canadian author living in Canada or the U.S." Purpose of the award: to encourage Vermont children to become enthusiastic and discriminating readers by providing them with books of good quality by living American or Canadian authors published in the current year. E-mail for entry rules. Judging is by the children grades 4–8. They vote for their favorite book. **DEADLINE:** December of year the book was published.

## DON FREEMAN MEMORIAL GRANT-IN-AID

Society of Children's Book Writers and Illustrators, 8271 Beverly Blvd., Los Angeles CA 90048.(323)782-

1010 **FAX:** (323) 782-1892 **E-MAIL:** [scbwi@scbwi.org](mailto:scbwi@scbwi.org). **WEBSITE:** [www.scbwi.org](http://www.scbwi.org). **PRIZE:** 1 grant of \$1,500 and 1 runner-up grant of \$500. **ENTRY FEE:** None. **GUIDELINES:** "The grant-in-aid is available to both full and associate members of the SCBWI who, as artists, seriously intend to make picture books their chief contribution to the field of children's literature." Purpose of award: to "enable picture book artists to further their understanding, training and work in the picture book genre." **DEADLINE:** Applications and prepared materials are available in October and must be postmarked February 1–March 1. Grant awarded and announced in August. SASE for award rules and entry forms. SASE for return of entries.

## GOLDEN KITE AWARDS

Society of Children's Book Writers and Illustrators, 8271 Beverly Blvd., Los Angeles CA 90048. (323)782-1010. **E-MAIL:** [scbwi@scbwi.org](mailto:scbwi@scbwi.org). **WEBSITE:** [www.scbwi.org](http://www.scbwi.org). **CONTACT:** SCBWI Golden Kite Coordinator. **PRIZE:** In addition to statuettes and plaques, the 4 winners receive \$2,500 cash, plus trip to the LA SCBWI Conference. **ENTRY FEE:** None. **GUIDELINES:** Requirements for entrants: "must be a member of

## PACE YOUR PICTURE BOOKS

When a writer is looking to share the emotional intensity of her story and fill it with heart, she only needs to investigate a powerful, one-syllable word: pace.

Pace is all about language and sound. As writers, we use questions, repetition and rhythmic descriptions to pace—because the sound of language matters. Just as in poetry, the sound and flow of words—their variety and structure—impacts the reader. We must share an ear for good rhythm by paying attention to meaning and sound. Meaning merges with rhythm. Repetition races, and descriptions become infectious. When it all works together, you can create a fabulous string of words that tickles readers' fancy.

With picture books, a unique style and voice is essential. Like the lyrics of a song, if pace and rhythm are well crafted, the reader will recite the words again and again.

Even questions can pace. In *Looking for a Moose*, author Phyllis Root asks the question, "What now?" and it pulls readers through the story. She invites them to "TROMP STOMP! TROMP STOMP!" through the woods—but not just any woods: "treesy-breezy, tilty-stilty, wobbly-knobly woods." Root's very original, built-out-of-words woods, with its rich rhythm and passionate energies, entice the reader to join in and explore.

Root uses onomatopoeia, alliteration, assonance and consonance to increase the pace, so where the descriptions would normally slow, the aural energy of the language speeds the reader along. And that's how writing can exude tone, energy, sound, action and language that becomes so infectious that it frolics. This is the power of pace.

—Jodell Sadler





SCBWI and books must be published in that year.” Winning books will be displayed at national conference in August. Books to be entered, as well as further inquiries, should be submitted to: The Society of Children’s Book Writers and Illustrators, above address. “The works chosen will be those that the judges feel exhibit excellence in writing, and in the case of the picture books—in illustration, and genuinely appeal to the interests and concerns of children. For the fiction and nonfiction awards, original works and single-author collections of stories or poems of which at least half are new and never before published in book form are eligible—anthologies and translations are not. For the illustration awards, the art or photographs must be original works (the texts—which may be fiction or nonfiction—may be original, public domain or previously published). The panel of judges will consist of professional authors, illustrators, editors or agents. **DEADLINE:** December 15. SASE for award rules.

### KENTUCKY BLUEGRASS AWARD

Lincoln County High School Media Center, 60 Educat, 521 Lancaster Ave., Stanford KY 40484. (606)365-9111. **FAX:** (606)365-1750. **E-MAIL:** kay.hensley@lincoln.kyschools.us. **WEBSITE:** www.kyreading.org. **CONTACT:** Kay Renee Hensley. **PRIZE:** A framed certificate and invitation to be recognized at the annual luncheon of the Kentucky Bluegrass Award. **ENTRY FEE:** None. **GUIDELINES:** Contest rules and entry forms are available on the website. Judging by children who participate through their schools or libraries. “Books are reviewed by a panel of teachers and librarians before they are placed on a master list for the year. These books must have been published within a 3-year period prior to the review. Winners are chosen from this list of preselected books. Books are divided into 4 divisions, K–2, 3–5, 6–8, 9–12 grades. Children from the entire state of Kentucky are involved in the selection of the annual winners for each of the divisions.” Award to promote readership among young children and young adolescents. Also to recognize exceptional creative efforts of authors and illustrators. Previously published submissions only. Submissions made by

author, made by author’s agent, nominated by teachers or librarians. Must be published no more than 3 years prior to the award year. **DEADLINE:** March 15.

### CORETTA SCOTT KING BOOK AWARDS

Coretta Scott King Book Awards Committee, Ethnic and Multicultural Information Exchange Round Table, American Library Association, 50 E. Huron St., Chicago IL 60611. (800)545-2433 ext: 4297. **FAX:** (312)280-3256. **E-MAIL:** olos@ala.org. **WEBSITE:** www.ala.org/csk. **PRIZE:** Breakfast held during ALA Annual Conference in June. **ENTRY FEE:** Contact for information. **GUIDELINES:** “The Coretta Scott King Book Awards is an annual award celebrating African-American experience. A new talent award may also be selected. An awards jury of children’s librarians judges the books from the previous year and selects the winners in January at the ALA Midwinter meeting. Call or e-mail ALA Office for Literacy and Outreach Services for jury list. **DEADLINE:** A copy of an entry must be sent to each juror by December 1 of the juried year. A copy of the jury list and directions for submitting titles can be found on website.

### THE VICKY METCALF AWARD FOR CHILDREN’S LITERATURE

The Writers’ Trust of Canada, 90 Richmond St. E., Suite 200, Toronto ON M5C 1P1 Canada. (416)504-8222. **FAX:** (416)504-9090. **E-MAIL:** info@writerstrust.com. **WEBSITE:** www.writerstrust.com. **CONTACT:** James Davies. **PRIZE:** \$20,000. **ENTRY FEE:** None. **GUIDELINES:** Open to Canadian residents only. The Vicky Metcalf Award is presented each fall to a Canadian writer for a body of work in children’s literature at The Writers’ Trust Awards event in Toronto. **DEADLINE:** Contact for information.

### MILKWEED PRIZE FOR CHILDREN’S LITERATURE

Milkweed Editions, 1011 Washington Ave. S., Suite 300, Minneapolis MN 55415-1246. (612)332-3192. **FAX:** (612)215-2550. **E-MAIL:** editor@milkweed.org. **WEBSITE:** www.milkweed.org. **CONTACT:** Daniel Slager, publisher. **PRIZE:** \$10,000 advance against royalties agreed to at the time of acceptance. **ENTRY FEE:** None. **GUIDELINES:**

Unpublished submissions only “in book form.” Please send SASE or visit website for award guidelines. The prize is awarded to the best work for children ages 8–13 that Milkweed agrees to publish in a calendar year. Submissions must follow our usual children’s guidelines. Award to recognize an outstanding literary novel for readers ages 8–13 and encourage writers to turn their attention to readers in this age group. **DEADLINE:** Contact for information.

### NATIONAL CHILDREN’S THEATRE FESTIVAL

Actors’ Playhouse at the Miracle Theatre, 280 Miracle Mile, Coral Gables FL 33134. (305)444-9293, ext. 615. **FAX:** (305)444-4181. **E-MAIL:** mauling@actorsplayhouse.org. **WEBSITE:** www.actorsplayhouse.org. **CONTACT:** Earl Maulding. **PRIZE:** First prize of \$500, full production and transportation to festival weekend based on availability. **ENTRY FEE:** \$10. **GUIDELINES:** Visit website or send SASE for contest rules and entry forms. Open to students: to bring together the excitement of the theater arts and the magic of young audiences through the creation of new musical works and to create a venue for playwrights/composers to showcase their artistic products. Submissions must be unpublished. Submissions are made by author or author’s agent. Final judges are of national reputation. Past judges include Joseph Robinette, Moses Goldberg and Luis Santeiro. **DEADLINE:** April 1 annually.

### NEW ENGLAND BOOK AWARDS

New England Independent Booksellers Association, 297 Broadway, #212, Arlington MA 02474. (781) 316-8894. **FAX:** (781)316-2605. **E-MAIL:** nan@neba.org. **WEBSITE:** www.newenglandbooks.org/Default.aspx?pagelD=234046. **CONTACT:** Nan Sorensen. **PRIZE:** Winners will receive \$250 for literacy to a charity of their choice. **ENTRY FEE:** None. **GUIDELINES:** “to promote New England authors who have produced a body of work that stands as a significant contribution to New England’s culture.” Previously published submissions only. Submissions made by New England booksellers; publishers. “Award is given to a specific title, fiction, nonfiction, children’s. The titles must be either about New England, set in New England or by

### EXCITING WRITING



Simple does not mean boring! Joanne Mattern, author of more than 150 books for children, says, “I think the most important thing to keep in mind when writing for beginning readers is not to lose the liveliness of the subject matter. Just because you are using simple words and short sentences doesn’t mean that you have to leave out all the details that give the subject depth. You have to not only keep it simple, but keep it fun! I’ve found the best way to do this is to keep the child in mind as I write and think about what he or she would really want to know about the subject.”

The language for these readers must be engaging. Use active verbs and specific nouns. Include wordplay if it fits your subject. Alliteration can be appealing, but don’t overdo it unless you are aiming for humor. Rhythm and repetition help the early learner. Not all publishers accept rhyme, so be sure to find out before you submit. Even if a publisher prefers to avoid end rhyme, internal rhyme might be acceptable.

Other poetic techniques are also inviting. Use luscious imagery to describe an unfamiliar object. Onomatopoeia adds zip to language. And it’s OK to use an occasional unfamiliar term. That’s how children learn new words. Just try to define any difficult words, either in the text or in a glossary.

Not all kids this age have a firm grasp of measurements, so use comparisons to give them a clearer picture. Say “as narrow as a pencil” or “the size of a door” to help them understand inches and feet—and include metric equivalents.

an author residing in New England. The titles must be hardcover, paperback original or reissue that was published between September 1–August 31 of the past year. Entries must be still in print and available. Judging by NEIBA membership. Requirements for entrants: Author/illustrator must live in New England. Submit written nominations only; actual books should

not be sent. Member bookstores receive materials to display winners' books. **DEADLINE:** July 2.

### NORTH AMERICAN INTERNATIONAL AUTO SHOW HIGH SCHOOL POSTER CONTEST

Detroit Auto Dealers Association, 1900 W. Big Beaver Rd., Troy MI 48084-3531. (248)643-0250. **FAX:** (248)283-5148. **E-MAIL:** [sherp@dada.org](mailto:sherp@dada.org). **WEBSITE:** [www.naias.com](http://www.naias.com). **CONTACT:** Sandy Herp. Open to students. Annual contest. **PRIZE:** Chairman's Award—\$1,000; Designer's Best of Show (Digital and Traditional)—\$500; Best Theme—\$250; Best Use of Color—\$250; Most Creative—\$250. A winner will be chosen in each category from grades 10, 11 and 12. First place in 10, 11, 12—\$500; second place—\$250; third place—\$100. **ENTRY FEE:** None. **GUIDELINES:** Submissions made by the author and illustrator. For contest rules and entry forms, retrieve information from website. Entries will be judged by an independent panel of recognized representatives of the art community. Entrants must be Michigan high school

students enrolled in grades 10–12. Winning posters may be displayed at the NAIAS 2009 and reproduced in the official NAIAS program, which is available to the public, international media, corporate executives and automotive suppliers. Winning posters may also be displayed on the official NAIAS website at the sole discretion of the NAIAS. **DEADLINE:** Contact for information.

### ORBIS PICTUS AWARD FOR OUTSTANDING NONFICTION FOR CHILDREN

The National Council of Teachers of English, 1111 W. Kenyon Rd., Urbana IL 61801-1096. (217)328-3870. **FAX:** (217)328-0977. **E-MAIL:** [dzagorski@ncte.org](mailto:dzagorski@ncte.org). **WEBSITE:** [www.ncte.org/awards/orbispictus](http://www.ncte.org/awards/orbispictus). **CONTACT:** Kim Ford, Memphis TN. **ENTRY FEE:** None. **PRIZE:** A plaque given at the NCTE Elementary Section Luncheon at the NCTE Annual Convention in November. Judging by a committee. **GUIDELINES:** Previously published submissions only. Submissions made by author, author's agent, by a person or group of people. Must be published



### GIVE YOUR CHARACTERS QUIRKS

With 175,000 books published each year, your character must stand out. How do you make your character similar to your readers yet unique? While your character has universal feelings and emotions, she has quirks that make her unusual, like these beloved characters:

- *Stargirl* by Jerry Spinelli. Stargirl dresses differently and plays “Happy Birthday” on the ukulele to her classmates, but her feelings of needing to be loved are universal.
- *Millicent Min, Girl Genius* by Lisa Yee. Millicent has an I.Q. that eclipses her peers, but she wants to be liked and included.
- *Marcelo in the Real World* by Francisco X. Stork. Marcelo sees the world through Asperger's Syndrome and, like most kids, desires to be appreciated for who he is.

What quirks will your character have? An unusual hobby? An unusual ability? Or a typical trait taken to an extreme, like high intelligence or exceptional musical ability? An

unusual way of looking at the world? An atypical fear? An unusual friend or family member?

The best way to uncover quirks for your characters are to refer to the three methods for character creation: memory, observation/fact and imagination.

Do you remember an unusual child when you went to school? What was that person's quirk? Did you have a particular way in which you stood out? A particular incident that happened to you that you could attribute to your character? Have you observed fascinating people in your community, in the newspaper or on TV? Have you come across someone with a unique job—perhaps the person who wakes at 3 a.m. to make donuts? Remember, unique jobs can be attributed to your character's parents. In the end, it doesn't matter where you draw inspiration—so just remember to make your main character stand out and be memorable to get a contest judge's attention.

—Donna Gephart

January 1–December 31 of contest year. Purpose of award: to promote and recognize excellence in the writing of nonfiction for children. “The name *Orbis Pictus* commemorates the work of Johannes Amos Comenius, ‘*Orbis Pictus—The World in Pictures*’ (1657), considered to be the first book actually planned for children.” **DEADLINE:** November 30. Call for award information.

### **HELEN KEATING OTT AWARD FOR OUTSTANDING CONTRIBUTION TO CHILDREN'S LITERATURE**

Church and Synagogue Library Association, 2920 SW Dolph Ct., Ste 3A, Portland OR 97219. (503)244-6919. **FAX:** (503)977-3734. **E-MAIL:** [csla@worldaccessnet.com](mailto:csla@worldaccessnet.com). **WEBSITE:** [www.cslainfo.org](http://www.cslainfo.org). **CONTACT:** Jeri Baker. **PRIZE:** Certificate of recognition, awards banquet, and 1 night stay in the hotel. **ENTRY FEE:** None. **GUIDELINES:** “This award is given to a person or organization that has made a significant contribution to promoting high moral and ethical values through children’s literature. Nomination for an award may be made by anyone. An application form is available by contacting Judy Janzen, Administrator of CSLA via e-mail at [csla@worldaccessnet.com](mailto:csla@worldaccessnet.com) or by calling 1-800-LIB-CSLA. Elements of creativity and innovation will be given high priority by the judges.” **DEADLINE:** April 1. “Recipient is honored in July during the conference.”

### **PENNSYLVANIA YOUNG READERS' CHOICE AWARDS PROGRAM**

Pennsylvania School Librarians Association, 148 S. Bethlehem Pike, Ambler PA 19002-5822. (215)643-5048. **FAX:** (215)646-7250. **E-MAIL:** [bellavance@verizon.net](mailto:bellavance@verizon.net). **WEBSITE:** [www.psla.org](http://www.psla.org). **CONTACT:** Jean B. Bellavance. **PRIZE:** Framed certificate. **ENTRY FEE:** None. **GUIDELINES:** SASE for contest rules and entry forms. Submissions nominated by a person or group. Must be published within 5 years of the award; for example, books published in 2005 to present are eligible for the 2009–2010 award. Judging by children of Pennsylvania (they vote). Requirements for entrants: currently living in North America. Reader’s Choice Award is to promote reading of quality books by young people in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, to promote teacher

and librarian involvement in children’s literature and to honor authors whose work has been recognized by the children of Pennsylvania. Four awards are given, 1 for each of the following grade level divisions: K–3, 3–6, 6–8, YA. View information at the Pennsylvania School Librarians’ website. **DEADLINE:** September 1.

### **EDGAR ALLAN POE AWARD**

Mystery Writers of America, Inc., 1140 Broadway, Suite 1507, New York NY 10001. (212)888-8171. **FAX:** (212)888-8107. **E-MAIL:** [mwa@mysterywriters.org](mailto:mwa@mysterywriters.org). **WEBSITE:** [www.mysterywriters.org](http://www.mysterywriters.org). **CONTACT:** Margery Flax. **PRIZE:** Ceramic bust of “Edgar” for winner; scrolls for all nominees. **ENTRY FEE:** None. **GUIDELINES:** Submissions made by the author, author’s agent; “normally by the publisher.” Previously published submissions only. Purpose of the award: to honor authors of distinguished works in the mystery field, whether for adults or children. Work must be published/produced the year of the contest. Submission information can be found at: [www.mysterywriters.org](http://www.mysterywriters.org). Judging by professional members of Mystery Writers of America. Nominee press release sent in mid-January. Winner announced at the Edgar Banquet, held in late April/early May. **DEADLINE:** Received by November 30.

### **TOMAS RIVERA MEXICAN AMERICAN CHILDREN'S BOOK AWARD**

Texas State University–San Marcos, EDU, 601 University Dr., San Marcos TX 78666-4613. (512)245-3839. **FAX:** (512)245-7911. **E-MAIL:** [jb23@txstate.edu](mailto:jb23@txstate.edu). **WEBSITE:** [www.education.txstate.edu](http://www.education.txstate.edu). **CONTACT:** Dr. Jennifer Battle. **PRIZE:** \$3,000 per book. **ENTRY FEE:** None. **GUIDELINES:** Competition open to adults. Annual contest. “To encourage authors, illustrators and publishers to produce books that authentically reflect the lives of Mexican-Americans appropriate for children and young adults in the United States.” Unpublished mss not accepted. Submissions made by “any interested individual or publishing company.” Must be published during the 2 years prior to the year of consideration for the appropriate category “Works for Younger Children” or “Works for Older Children”. Contact Dr. Jennifer Battle for information and send copy of book. Judging



## CONTESTS FOR YOUNG WRITERS

### SANDRA CARON YOUNG ADULT POETRY PRIZE

National League of American Pen Women, Nob Hill, San Francisco Branch, 1544 Sweetwood Dr., Broadmoor Vlg. Colma CA 94015-2029. **E-MAIL:** pennobhill@aol.com. **WEBSITE:** www.soulmakingcontest.us. **CONTACT:** Eileen Malone. **ENTRY FEE:** \$5/entry (make checks payable to NLAPW, Nob Hill Branch). **PRIZE:** First place: \$100; second place: \$50; third place: \$25. **GUIDELINES:** Open to any writer in grades 9–12. 3 poems/entry; 1 poem/page; 1–page poems only from poets in grades 9–12 or equivalent. Annual. **DEADLINE:** November 30. Guidelines for SASE.

### NEW VOICES AWARD

Lee & Low Books, 95 Madison Ave., New York NY 10016. (212)779-4400. **FAX:** (212)532-6035. **E-MAIL:** general@leeandlow.com. **WEBSITE:** www.leeandlow.com. **CONTACT:** Louise May. **PRIZE:** New Voices Award—\$1,000 and standard publication contract (regardless of whether or not writer has an agent) along with an advance against royalties; New Voices Honor Award—\$500 prize. **ENTRY FEE:** None. **GUIDELINES:** Open to students. Purpose of contest: to encourage writers of color to enter the world of children's books. Lee & Low Books is one of the few minority-owned publishing companies in the country. We have published more than 85 first-time writers and illustrators. Winning titles include *The Blue Roses*, winner of a Patterson Prize for Books for Young People, *Janna and the Kings*, an IRA Children's Book Award Notable, and *Sixteen Years in Sixteen Seconds*, selected for the Texas Bluebonnet Award Masterlist. Submissions made by author. SASE for contest rules or visit website. Judging by Lee & Low editors. Restrictions of media for illustrators: The author must be a writer of color who is a resident of the U.S. and who has not previously published a children's picture book. For additional information, send SASE or visit Lee & Low's website. **DEADLINE:** September 30.

### QUILL AND SCROLL INTERNATIONAL WRITING/PHOTO CONTEST

Quill and Scroll, School of Journalism and Mass Communication, University of Iowa, Iowa City IA 52242-2004. (319)335-3457. **FAX:** (319)335-3989. **E-MAIL:** quill-scroll@uiowa.edu. **WEBSITE:** www.uiowa.edu/

~quill-sc. **CONTACT:** Vanessa Shelton. **PRIZE:** Engraved plaque to junior high and high school level sweepstakes winners. Judging by various judges. **ENTRY FEE:** \$2/entry. **GUIDELINES:** Open to students. Entry form available on website. Requirements for entrants: must be students in grades 9–12 for high school division; grades 6–8 for junior high school division. Previously published submissions only. Submissions made by the author or school newspaper adviser. Must be published within the last year. SASE for contest rules and entry forms or visit website for more information and forms. Quill and Scroll acquires the right to publish submitted material in its magazine or website if it is chosen as a winning entry. **DEADLINE:** February 5.

### ROCKY MOUNTAIN BOOK AWARD: ALBERTA CHILDREN'S CHOICE BOOK AWARD

Rocky Mountain Book Award Committee, Box 42, Lethbridge AB T1J 3Y3 Canada. (403)381-0855. **E-MAIL:** rockymountainbookaward@shaw.ca. **WEBSITE:** rmba.lethsd.ab.ca. **CONTACT:** Michelle Dimnik. Submit entries to: Richard Chase, board member. **PRIZE:** Gold medal and author tour of selected Alberta schools. Judging by students. **ENTRY FEE:** None. **GUIDELINES:** Open to students. Canadian authors and illustrators only. Purpose of contest: "reading motivation for students, promotion of Canadian authors, illustrators and publishers." Previously unpublished submissions only. Submissions made by author's agent or nominated by a person or group. Must be published between 2008–2010. **DEADLINE:** January. SASE for contest rules and entry forms.

### SKIPPING STONES YOUTH HONOR AWARDS

Skipping Stones, P.O. Box 3939, Eugene OR 97403-0939. (541)342-4956. **E-MAIL:** editor@SkippingStones.org. **WEBSITE:** www.skippingstones.org. **PRIZE:** The winners are published in the September/October issue of *Skipping Stones*. Now in its 21st year, *Skipping Stones* is a winner of both a Newsstand Resources and a Parent's Choice award. **ENTRY FEE:** \$3. Everyone who enters the contest receives the September-October issue featuring Youth Awards. **GUIDELINES:** Open to students. SASE for contest rules. Entries must include certificate of originality by a parent and/or teacher and a cover letter that includes cultural back-

ground information on the author. Submissions can either be mailed or e-mailed. Judging by Skipping Stones staff. "Up to 10 awards are given in 3 categories: (1) Compositions—(essays, poems, short stories, songs, travelogues, etc.) should be typed (double-spaced) or neatly handwritten. Fiction or nonfiction should be limited to 1,000 words; poems to 30 lines. Non-English writings are also welcome. (2) Artwork—(drawings, cartoons, paintings or photo essays with captions) should have the artist's name, age and address on the back of each page. Send the originals with SASE. Black and white photos are especially welcome. Limit: 8 pieces. (3) Youth organizations—tell us how your club or group works to: (a) preserve the nature and ecology in your area, (b) enhance the quality of life for low-income, minority or disabled or (c) improve racial or cultural harmony in your school or community." Purpose of contest: "to recognize youth, 7–17, for their contributions to multicultural awareness, nature and ecology, social issues, peace and nonviolence." **DEADLINE:** June 25.

### VEGETARIAN ESSAY CONTEST

The Vegetarian Resource Group, P.O. Box 1463, Baltimore MD 21203. (410)366-VEGE. **FAX:** (410)366-8804. **E-MAIL:** vrg@vrg.org. **WEBSITE:** www.vrg.org. **PRIZE:** \$50 savings bond. **ENTRY FEE:** None. **GUIDELINES:** Open to students. Unpublished submissions only. SASE for contest rules and entry forms. Purpose of contest: to promote vegetarianism in young people. Judging by awards committee. Acquires right for The Vegetarian Resource Group to reprint essays. Requirements for entrants: age 18 and under. Winning works may be published in *Vegetarian Journal*, instructional materials for students. Submit 2–3 page essay on any aspect of vegetarianism, which is the abstinence of meat, fish and fowl. Entrants can base paper on interviewing, research or personal opinion. Need not be vegetarian to enter. **DEADLINE:** May 1 annually.

### VFW VOICE OF DEMOCRACY

Veterans of Foreign Wars of the U.S., 406 W. 34th St., Kansas City MO 64111. (816)968-1117. **FAX:** (816)968-1149. **WEBSITE:** www.vfw.org. **CONTACT:** Your participating high school teacher, counselor, our website www.vfw.org or your local VFW Post to enter. **PRIZE:** Awards ranging

from \$1,000–30,000. **ENTRY FEE:** None. **GUIDELINES:** Open to high school students. Requirements for entrants: "9th–12th grade students in public, parochial, private and home schools are eligible to compete. Former first-place state winners are not eligible to compete again." Purpose of contest: to give high school students the opportunity to voice their opinions about their responsibility to our country and to convey those opinions via the broadcast media to all of America. **DEADLINE:** November 1.

### RITA WILLIAMS YOUNG ADULT PROSE PRIZE

National League of American Pen Women, Nob Hill, San Francisco Branch, 1544 Sweetwood Dr., Broadmoor Vlg. CA 94015-2029. **E-MAIL:** pennohill@aol.com. **WEBSITE:** www.soulmakingcontest.us. **CONTACT:** Eileen Malone. **PRIZE:** first place: \$100; second place: \$50; third place: \$25. **ENTRY FEE:** \$5/entry (make checks payable to NLAPW, Nob Hill Branch) International entrants please send Travelers Check drawn on a USA Bank. **GUIDELINES:** Guidelines for SASE or at website. Open to students. Up to 3,000 words in story, essay, journal entry, creative nonfiction or memoir by writers in grades 9–12. Annual prize. Open to any writer in grades 9–12 or equivalent. **DEADLINE:** November 30.

### PAUL A. WITTY OUTSTANDING LITERATURE AWARD

International Reading Association, Special Interest Group, Reading for Gifted and Creative Learning, School of Education, P.O. Box 10034, Lamar University, Beaumont, TX 77710. (409)286-5941. **FAX:** (409)880-8384. **WEBSITE:** www.reading.org/General/AdvocacyandOutreach/SIGS/ReadingGiftedSIG.aspx. **CONTACT:** Dorothy Sisk. **PRIZE:** \$25 and plaque, also certificates of merit. **ENTRY FEE:** None. **GUIDELINES:** Open to students. Categories: poetry/prose at elementary, junior high and senior high levels. Unpublished submissions only. SASE for award rules and entry forms. Judging by 2 committees for screening and awarding. "The elementary students' entries must be legible and may not exceed 1,000 words. Secondary students' prose entries should be typed and may exceed 1,000 words if necessary. At both elementary and secondary levels, if poetry is entered, a set of 5 poems must be submitted. All entries and requests for applications must include a self-addressed stamped envelope."

of nominations by a regional committee, national committee judges finalists. Annual ceremony honoring the book and author/illustrator is held during Hispanic Heritage Month at Texas State University—San Marcos in collaboration with the Texas Book Festival. **DEADLINE:** November 1 of publication year.

### SCBWI MAGAZINE MERIT AWARDS

Society of Children's Book Writers and Illustrators, 8271 Beverly Blvd., Los Angeles CA 90048. **FAX:** (323)782-1010. **E-MAIL:** [scbwi@scbwi.org](mailto:scbwi@scbwi.org). **WEBSITE:** [www.scbwi.org](http://www.scbwi.org). **CONTACT:** Stephanie Gordon. **PRIZE:** Plaques and honor certificates for each of 4 categories (fiction, nonfiction, illustration, poetry). **ENTRY FEE:** None. **GUIDELINES:** Previously published submissions only. For rules and procedures, see website. Must be a SCBWI member. Purpose of the award: "to recognize outstanding original magazine work for young people published during that year and having been written or illustrated by members of SCBWI." Judging by a magazine editor and 2 "full" SCBWI members. "All magazine work for young people by a SCBWI member—writer, artist or photographer—is eligible during the year of original publication. In the case of co-authored work, both authors must be SCBWI members. Members must submit their own work." Requirements for entrants: 4 copies each of the published work and proof of publication (may be contents page) showing the name of the magazine and the date of issue. The SCBWI is a professional organization of writers and illustrators and others interested in children's literature. Membership is open to the general public at large. **DEADLINE:** Entries must be submitted January 1–December 15 of the year of publication.

### SCBWI WORK-IN-PROGRESS GRANTS

Society of Children's Book Writers and Illustrators, 8271 Beverly Blvd., Los Angeles CA 90048. (323)782-1010. **FAX:** (323)782-1892. **E-MAIL:** [scbwi@scbwi.org](mailto:scbwi@scbwi.org). **WEBSITE:** [www.scbwi.org](http://www.scbwi.org). **PRIZE:** 5 grants of \$1,500 will be awarded annually. Runner-up grants of \$500 (1 in each category) will also be awarded. **ENTRY FEE:** None. **GUIDELINES:** Requests for applications may be made beginning October 1. SASE for applications for grants. "The SCBWI Work-in-Progress Grants have been estab-

lished to assist children's book writers in the completion of a specific project." 4 categories: (1) General Work-in-Progress Grant (2) Grant for a Contemporary Novel for Young People (3) Nonfiction Research Grant (4) Grant for a Work Whose Author Has Never Had a Book Published. In any year, an applicant may apply for any of the grants except the 1 awarded for a work whose author has never had a book published. (The recipient of this grant will be chosen from entries in all categories.) "The grants are available to both full and associate members of the SCBWI. They are not available for projects on which there are already contracts." Previous recipients not eligible to apply. **DEADLINE:** Completed applications accepted February 1–April 1 of each year.

### KAY SNOW WRITERS' CONTEST

9045 SW Barbur Blvd. #5A, Portland OR 97219-4027. (503)452-1592. **FAX:** (503)452-0372. **E-MAIL:** [wilwrite@teleport.com](mailto:wilwrite@teleport.com). **WEBSITE:** [www.willamettewriters.com](http://www.willamettewriters.com). **CONTACT:** Lizzy Shannon, contest director. **PRIZE:** \$300 per category (fiction, nonfiction, juvenile, poetry, script writing), \$50 for students in 3 divisions: 1–5, 6–8, 9–12. **ENTRY FEE:** \$10, Willamette Writers' members; \$15, nonmembers; free for student writers grades 1–12. **GUIDELINES:** Open to students. Unpublished, original submissions only. Purpose of contest: "to encourage beginning and established writers to continue the craft." Submissions made by the author. **DEADLINE:** April 23. SASE for contest rules and entry forms. Judges are anonymous.

### SYDNEY TAYLOR MANUSCRIPT COMPETITION

Association of Jewish Libraries, 204 Park St., Montclair NJ 07042. **E-MAIL:** [stmacajl@aol.com](mailto:stmacajl@aol.com). **WEBSITE:** [www.jewishlibraries.org](http://www.jewishlibraries.org). **CONTACT:** Aileen Grossberg. **PRIZE:** \$1,000. **ENTRY FEE:** None. **GUIDELINES:** Download rules and forms from website. Open to students and to any unpublished writer of fiction. Unpublished submissions only. Purpose of the contest: "This competition is for unpublished writers of fiction. Material should be for readers ages 8–11, with universal appeal that will serve to deepen the understanding of Judaism for all children, revealing positive aspects of Jewish life." Judging by qualified judges from within the Association

of Jewish Libraries. Requirements for entrants: must be an unpublished fiction writer; also, books must range from 64–200 pages in length. “AJL assumes no responsibility for publication, but hopes this cash incentive will serve to encourage new writers of children’s stories with Jewish themes for all children.” **DEADLINE:** December 15. Award winner will be notified in April, and the award will be presented at the convention in June.

### THE TORONTO BOOK AWARDS

City of Toronto, 100 Queen St. W, 2nd Floor, West Tower, Toronto ON M5H 2N2 Canada. (416)392-4674. **E-MAIL:** [bkurmey@toronto.ca](mailto:bkurmey@toronto.ca). **CONTACT:** Bev Kurmeyer, protocol officer. **PRIZE:** \$15,000. **ENTRY FEE:** Contact for information. **GUIDELINES:** Must be published the calendar year prior to the award year. Recognizes books of literary or artistic merit that are evocative of Toronto. Submissions made by author, author’s agent or nominated by a person or group. Judging by committee. **DEADLINE:** Last weekday of March, annually.

### WESTERN HERITAGE AWARDS

National Cowboy & Western Heritage Museum, 1700 NE 63rd St., Oklahoma City, OK 73111-7997. (405)478-2250. **FAX:** (405)478-4714. **E-MAIL:** [ssimpson@nationalcowboymuseum.org](mailto:ssimpson@nationalcowboymuseum.org). **WEBSITE:** [www.nationalcowboymuseum.org](http://www.nationalcowboymuseum.org). **CONTACT:** Shayla Simpson. **PRIZE:** A Wrangler bronze sculpture designed by famed western artist John Free. **ENTRY FEE:** \$50/entry. **GUIDELINES:** Previously published submissions only; must be published the calendar year before the awards are presented. Requirements for entrants: The material must pertain to the development or preservation of the West, either from a historical or contemporary viewpoint. Literary entries must have been published December 1–November 30 of calendar year. Film, music or television entries must have been released or aired January 1–December 31 of calendar year of entry. Works recognized during special awards ceremonies held annually at the museum. There is an autograph party preceding the awards. Awards ceremonies are sometimes broadcast. The WHA are presented annually to encourage the accurate and

artistic telling of great stories of the West through 16 categories of western literature, television, film and music; including fiction, nonfiction, children’s books and poetry. Judging by a panel of judges selected each year with distinction in various fields of western art and heritage. **DEADLINE:** For literary: November 30. For film, music and television: December 31. Entries not returned.

### ALICE WOOD MEMORIAL OHIOANA AWARD FOR CHILDREN’S LITERATURE

Ohioana Library Association, 274 E. First Ave., Suite 300, Columbus OH 43201. (614)466-3831. **FAX:** (614)728-6974. **E-MAIL:** [ohioana@sloma.state.oh.us](mailto:ohioana@sloma.state.oh.us) or [Ohioana@Ohioana.org](mailto:Ohioana@Ohioana.org). **WEBSITE:** [www.ohioana.org](http://www.ohioana.org). **CONTACT:** Linda R. Hengst. **PRIZE:** \$1,000. **ENTRY FEE:** None. **GUIDELINES:** Offered to an author whose body of work has made, and continues to make, a significant contribution to literature for children or young adults and through their work as a writer, teacher, administrator and community member, interest in children’s literature has been encouraged and children have become involved with reading. Nomination forms for SASE. Recipient must have been born in Ohio or lived in Ohio at least 5 years. **DEADLINE:** December 31.

### WRITERS-EDITORS NETWORK ANNUAL INTERNATIONAL WRITING COMPETITION

(formerly Florida State Writing Competition), CNW/FFWA, P.O. Box A, North Stratford NH 03590. (603)922-8338. **FAX:** (603)922-8339. **E-MAIL:** [contest@writers-editors.com](mailto:contest@writers-editors.com). **WEBSITE:** [www.writers-editors.com](http://www.writers-editors.com). **CONTACT:** Dana K. Cassell. **PRIZE:** \$100 first place, \$75 second place, \$50 third place, certificates for honorable mentions. **ENTRY FEE:** \$5 (members), \$10 (nonmembers) or \$10–20 for entries longer than 3,000 words. **GUIDELINES:** For copy of official entry form, send #10 SASE or visit website. Categories include children’s literature (length appropriate to age category). Judging by librarians, editors and published authors. Judging criteria: interest and readability within age group, writing style and mechanics, originality, salability. **DEADLINE:** March 15. List of winners on website. 🏆

JENNIFER BENNER is the assistant editor of *Writing Contests*.



## POETRY CONTESTS & AWARDS

*Here are 64 competitions for writers  
of poetry and chapbooks.*

**A**nybody can post their poetry online at any time or even self-publish a chapbook and get it on Amazon. While their work is indeed “out there” and available for the masses, it’s not easy to get the masses to take note of it just yet. One solution for writers is to enter work in a contest and put your poems up against the work of others. If your poem(s) are honored, the award and publicity will give you a valuable boost for attention and sales.

On the following pages, you will find complete listings for 64 contests and awards for writers of poetry and chapbooks. These contests offer you the opportunity for your work to be judged on the basis of quality alone without the outside factors (like budgets, trends and the marketplace) that sometimes influence publishing decisions. Some focus on form, such as sonnets or a collection of work, while others feature writing on particular themes or topics. Chances are, no matter what type of poems you write, there is a contest or award program that may be a good match for you.

These listings reflect a variety of skill levels and degrees of competitiveness, so it’s important to read each carefully and note its unique requirements. Never enter a contest without consulting the guidelines and following directions to the letter. Good luck!

### ABBREVIATIONS

**ISBN:** Industry standard book number **MS.:** Manuscript **MSS.:** Manuscripts **SAS:** Self addressed stamped (as in postcard) **SASE:** Self addressed stamped envelope **TBA:** To be announced

**THE 49TH PARALLEL POETRY AWARD**

Western Washington University, Mail Stop 9053, Bellingham WA 98225. **E-MAIL:** bhreview@wwu.edu.

**WEBSITE:** www.wwu.edu/~bhreview. **PRIZE:** The annual 49th Parallel Poetry Award offers first prize of \$1,000, plus publication in and a year's subscription to *Bellingham Review*. Runners-up and finalists may be considered for publication. **ENTRY FEE:** \$18 for first entry (up to 3 poems); \$10 each additional poem. Make checks payable to *Bellingham Review*. **GUIDELINES:** Guidelines available for SASE or on website. Submissions must be unpublished and not accepted for publication elsewhere. Considers simultaneous submissions, but work must be withdrawn from the competition if accepted for publication elsewhere. Submit up to 3 poems. "Poems within a series will each be treated as a separate entry." For each entry, include a 3x5 index card stating the title of the work, the category (poetry), the poet's name, phone number, address and e-mail. "Make sure writing is legible on this card. Author's name must not appear anywhere on the manuscript." Include SASE for results only; mss will not be returned. "Everyone entering the competition will receive a complimentary 2-issue subscription to *Bellingham Review*." **DEADLINE:** entries must be postmarked December 1–March 15.

**AKRON POETRY PRIZE**

The University of Akron Press, Akron OH 44325-1703. (330)972-5342. Fax: (330)972-8364. **E-MAIL:** marybid@uakron.edu. **WEBSITE:** www.uakron.edu/uapress/poetryprize. **CONTACT:** Mary Biddinger, editor. **PRIZE:** Offers annual award of \$1,000 plus publication of a book-length ms. **ENTRY FEE:** \$25. **GUIDELINES:** Submit 48 or more pages, typed, single-spaced; optional self-addressed postcard for confirmation. Submissions must be unpublished. Considers simultaneous submissions (with notification of acceptance elsewhere). Mss will not be returned. Do not send mss bound or enclosed in covers. See website for complete guidelines. Competition receives 500+ entries. Intimate friends, relatives, current and former students of the final judge (students in an academic, degree-conferring program or its equivalent) are not eligible to enter the competition. **DEADLINE:**

Entries accepted May 1–June 15 only. 2009 winner was Oliver de la Paz for *Requiem For The Orchard*. Winner posted on website by September 30.

**AGHA SHAHID ALI PRIZE IN POETRY**

University of Utah Press, J. Willard Marriott Lib., Ste 5400, 295 S. 1500 East, Salt Lake City UT 84112. (801)581-6771. Fax: (801)581-3365. **WEBSITE:** www.uofupress.com/Agha-Shahid-Ali. **PRIZE:** The University of Utah Press and the University of Utah Department of English offer an annual award of \$1,000, publication of a book-length poetry ms, and a reading in the Guest Writers Series. **ENTRY FEE:** \$25/book submission. **GUIDELINES:** Guidelines available on website. Poems must be unpublished as a collection, but individual poems may have been previously published elsewhere. Considers simultaneous submissions; "however, entrants must notify the press immediately if the collection submitted is accepted for publication elsewhere during the competition." Submit 48–64 typed pages of poetry, with no names or other identifying information appearing on title page or within ms. Include cover sheet with complete contact information (name, address, telephone, e-mail address). Submissions must be in English. Mss will not be returned. **DEADLINE:** 2011: February 1–April 15. Competition receives more than 300 mss/year. 2009 winner was Jon Wilkins. Winner announced on press website in October; series editor contacts winning poet. Copies of winning books are available for \$14.95 from University of Utah Press ((800)621-2736 for order fulfillment) or through website.

**THE AMERICAN POETRY REVIEW/  
HONICKMAN FIRST BOOK PRIZE**

1700 Sansom St. Suite 800, Philadelphia PA 19103. **E-MAIL:** sberg@aprweb.org; escanlon@aprweb.org. **WEBSITE:** www.aprweb.org. **CONTACT:** Stephen Berg and Elizabeth Scanlon, editors. Annual award to encourage excellence in poetry, and to provide a wide readership for a deserving first book of poems. **PRIZE:** Offers \$3,000, publication of a book-length ms, and distribution by Copper Canyon Press through Consortium. **ENTRY FEE:** \$25/book ms. **GUIDELINES:** Guidelines available on website. Open to U.S. citizens writing in

English and who have not yet published a book-length collection of poems which was assigned an ISBN. Send a poetry ms of 48 pages or more, single-spaced, paginated, with a table of contents and acknowledgements. Include SASE for notification only and 2 title pages; 1 containing name, address, e-mail, phone number and book title; second title page should contain the title only. **DEADLINE:** August 1–October 31, 2010 for 2011. 2010 winner was Melissa Stein (*Rough Honey*).

### THE ANHINGA PRIZE FOR POETRY

Anhinga Press, Tallahassee FL 32302. (850)442-1408. Fax: (850)442-6323. **E-MAIL:** info@anhinga.org. **WEBSITE:** www.anhinga.org. **CONTACT:** Rick Campbell, poetry editor. **PRIZE:** The annual Anhinga Prize awards \$2,000, a reading tour of Florida and publication of a book-length poetry ms. **ENTRY FEE:** \$25. **GUIDELINES:** Guidelines available for SASE or on website. Past judges include Donald Hall, Joy Harjo, Robert Dana, Mark Jarman and Tony Hoagland. Past winners include Frank X. Gaspar, Julia Levine, Keith Ratzlaff and Rhett Iseman Trull. **DEADLINE:** Submit from February 15–May 1.

### AUTUMN HOUSE POETRY PRIZE

P.O. Box 60100, Pittsburgh PA 15211. (412)381-4261. **E-MAIL:** msimms@autumnhouse.org. **WEBSITE:** autumnhouse.org. **CONTACT:** Michael Simms, editor. Autumn House is a nonprofit corporation with the mission of publishing and promoting poetry. We have published books by Gerald Stern, Ruth L. Schwartz, Ed Ochester, Andrea Hollander Budy, George Bloch, Jo McDougall and others." Advice: "Include only your best poems." **PRIZE:** Offers annual prize of \$2,500 and publication of book-length ms with national promotion. **ENTRY FEE:** \$25/ms. **GUIDELINES:** Guidelines available for SASE, by e-mail or on website. Submission must be unpublished as a collection, but individual poems may have been previously published elsewhere. Considers simultaneous submissions. Submit 50–80 pages of poetry ("blind judging—2 cover sheets requested"). Competition receives 700 entries/year. **DEADLINE:** June 30 annually. 2009 winner was Jacqueline Berger. Winners announced through mailings and through ads in *Poets & Writers*, *American Poetry Review* and *Writer's*

*Chronicle* (extensive publicity for winner). Copies of winning books available from Amazon.com, Barnes & Noble, Borders and other retailers.

### GEORGE BENNETT FELLOWSHIP

Phillips Exeter Academy, 20 Main St., Exeter NH 03833-2460. **E-MAIL:** teaching\_opportunities@exeter.edu. **WEBSITE:** www.exeter.edu/english/bennett.html. **PRIZE:** Provides an annual \$12,600 fellowship plus residency (room and board) to a writer with a ms in progress. The fellow's only official duties are to be in residence while the academy is in session and to be available to students interested in writing. **ENTRY FEE:** \$5. **GUIDELINES:** Application materials and guidelines available for SASE or on website. The committee favors writers who have not yet published a book-length work with a major publisher. **DEADLINE:** December 1. Competition receives 190 entries.

### THE PATRICIA BIBBY FIRST BOOK AWARD

Tebot Bach, P.O. Box 7887, Huntington Beach CA 92615-7887. **E-MAIL:** info@tebotbach.org. **WEBSITE:** www.tebotbach.org. **CONTACT:** Mifanwy Kaiser. **PRIZE:** The Patricia Bibby First Book Award offers \$1,000 and publication of a book-length poetry manuscript by Tebot Bach. **ENTRY FEE:** \$25. Make checks/money orders payable to Tebot Bach with reading fee and title of ms on the notation line. **GUIDELINES:** Complete guidelines available by e-mail or on website. Open to "all poets writing in English who have not committed to publishing collections of poetry of 36 poems or more in editions of over 400 copies." Submissions must be unpublished as a collection, but individual poems may have been previously published elsewhere. Considers simultaneous submissions, but Tebot Bach must be notified immediately by e-mail if the collection is accepted for publication. Partial guidelines: Submit 60–84 pages of poetry, letter-quality, single-spaced; clear photocopies acceptable. Use binder clip; no staples, folders or printer-bound copies. Include 2 title pages: 1 (not fastened to ms) with ms title, poet's name, address, phone number and e-mail address; the second (fastened to ms) with ms title only. Also include table of contents. Include SAS postcard for notification of receipt of entry and SASE

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for results only; mss will not be returned. Judges are selected annually. **DEADLINE:** October 31 (postmark) annually. Winner announced each year in April.

### **BINGHAMTON UNIVERSITY MILT KESSLER POETRY BOOK AWARD**

Binghamton University Creative Writing Program, P.O. Box 6000, Binghamton NY 13902. (607)777-2713. Fax: (607)777-2408. **E-MAIL:** cwpro@binghamton.edu. **WEBSITE:** english.binghamton.edu/cwpro. **CONTACT:** Maria Mazziotti Gillan, award director. **PRIZE:** Offers annual award of \$1,000 for a book of poetry judged best of those published that year by a poet over the age of 40. **ENTRY FEE:** None. **GUIDELINES:** "Submit books published that year; do not submit manuscripts." Entry form and guidelines available for SASE, by e-mail or on website. Submit 3 copies of book. Competition receives 500 books/year. **DEADLINE:** March 1. **NOTE:** Not to be confused with the Milton Kessler Memorial Prize for Poetry sponsored by Harpur Palate.

### **BLUE LIGHT POETRY PRIZE AND CHAPBOOK CONTEST**

3600 Lyon St., San Francisco CA 94122. **E-MAIL:** blue lightpress@aol.com. **PRIZE:** The Blue Light Poetry Prize and Chapbook Contest offers a cash prize and publication by Blue Light Press. "The winner will receive a \$100 honorarium and 50 copies of his or her book, which can be sold for \$10 each, for a total of \$600." **ENTRY FEE:** \$10. Make checks payable to Blue Light Press. **GUIDELINES:** Guidelines available with SASE or by e-mail. Submit ms of 10–24 pages, typed or printed with a laser or inkjet printer. No e-mail submissions. Include SASE and postcard for notification of receipt of ms. **DEADLINE:** June 15 for chapbook contest. Winner announced in November. Deadline is January 31 for full-length ms contest, 50–80 pages. Winner announced in June.

### **THE BOSTON REVIEW ANNUAL POETRY CONTEST**

Boston Review, 35 Medford St., Suite 302, Somerville MA 02143. (617)591-0505. Fax: (617)591-0440. **E-MAIL:** review@bostonreview.net. **WEBSITE:** www.bostonreview.net. **PRIZE:** Offers \$1,500 and publication in

*Boston Review*. **ENTRY FEE:** \$20 (\$30 for international submissions); all entrants receive a 1-year subscription to *Boston Review*. Make checks payable to *Boston Review*. **GUIDELINES:** Guidelines available for SASE or on website. "Any poet writing in English is eligible, unless he or she is a current student, former student, or close personal friend of the judge." Submissions must be unpublished. Submit up to 5 poems, no more than 10 pages total, in duplicate. Include cover sheet with poet's name, address and phone number; no identifying information on the poems themselves. No mss will be returned. **DEADLINE:** June 1 (postmark). Winner announced in early November on website. 2009 Winner: John Gallagher.

### **BOULEVARD EMERGING POETS CONTEST**

PMB 325, 6614 Clayton Rd., Richmond Heights MO 63117. **E-MAIL:** kellyleavitt@boulevardmagazine.org. **WEBSITE:** www.boulevardmagazine.org. **CONTACT:** Kelly Leavitt, managing editor. **PRIZE:** Annual contest offers \$1,000 and publication in *Boulevard* for the best group of 3 poems by a poet who has not yet published a book of poetry with a nationally distributed press. **ENTRY FEE:** \$15/group of 3 poems, \$15 for each additional group of 3 poems; includes 1-year subscription to *Boulevard*. Make checks payable to *Boulevard*. **GUIDELINES:** Guidelines available on website. "All entries will be considered for publication and payment at our regular rates." Submissions must be unpublished. Considers simultaneous submissions. Submit 3 poems, typed; may be a sequence or unrelated. On page 1 of first poem, type poet's name, address, phone number and titles of the 3 poems. Include 3×5 index card with poet's name, address, phone number and titles of poems. Include SAS postcard for notification of receipt of ms; mss will not be returned. Judge: editors of *Boulevard* magazine. "No one affiliated with *Boulevard* may enter the contest." **DEADLINE:** June 1 (postmark).

### **THE BRIAR CLIFF REVIEW FICTION, POETRY AND CREATIVE NONFICTION CONTEST**

3303 Rebecca St., Sioux City IA 51104-2100. **WEBSITE:** www.briarcliff.edu/bcreview. **CONTACT:** Jeanne Emmons, poetry editor. **PRIZE:** *The Briar Cliff Review* sponsors an



annual contest offering \$1,000 and publication to each first-prize winner in fiction, poetry and creative nonfiction. **ENTRY FEE:** \$20 for 3 poems. "All entrants receive a copy of the magazine (a \$15 value) containing the winning entries." **GUIDELINES:** Guidelines available on website. Submit 3 poems, single-spaced on 8.5×11 paper, no more than 1 poem/page. Include separate cover sheet with author's name, address, e-mail and poem title(s); no name on ms. Previous year's winner and former students of editors ineligible. Winning pieces accepted for publication on the basis of first-time rights. Considers simultaneous submissions, "but notify us immediately upon acceptance elsewhere." Include SASE for results only; mss will not be returned. Judge: the editors of *The Briar Cliff Review*. **DEADLINE:** November 1.

### BRITTINGHAM PRIZE IN POETRY

University of Wisconsin Press, Dept. of English, 600 N. Park St., Madison WI 53706. **E-MAIL:** rwallace@wisc.edu. **WEBSITE:** www.wisc.edu/wisconsinpress/index.html. **CONTACT:** Ronald Wallace, poetry editor. **PRIZE:** The annual Brittingham Prize in Poetry is 1 of 2 prizes awarded by The University of Wisconsin Press. Offers \$1,000 plus publication, with an additional \$1,500 honorarium to cover expenses of a reading in Madison. **ENTRY FEE:** \$25. Note: \$25 fee applies to consideration of same entry for the Felix Pollak Prize in Poetry—1 fee for 2 contest entries. Make checks/money orders payable to University of Wisconsin Press. **GUIDELINES:** Guidelines available for SASE or on website. Submissions must be unpublished as a collection, but individual poems may have been published elsewhere (publication must be acknowledged). Considers simultaneous submissions if notified of selection elsewhere. Submit 50–80 unbound ms pages, typed single-spaced (with double spaces between stanzas). Clean photocopies are acceptable. Include 1 title page with poet's name, address and telephone number and 1 with title only. No translations. SASE required. Will return results only; mss will not be returned. Qualified readers will screen all mss. Judge: "a distinguished poet who will remain anonymous until the winners are announced in mid-February." **DEADLINE:** Submit September 1–27

(postmark). 2010 Brittingham Prize winner was Jennifer Boyden for *The Mouths of Grazing Things*.

### GERALD CABLE BOOK AWARD

Silverfish Review Press, P.O. Box 3541, Eugene OR 97403. (541)344-5060. **E-MAIL:** sfrpress@earthlink.net. **WEBSITE:** www.silverfishreviewpress.com. **CONTACT:** Rodger Moody, editor. **PRIZE:** Offers annual award of \$1,000, publication by Silverfish Review Press and 25 author copies to a book-length ms of original poetry by an author who has not yet published a full-length collection. **ENTRY FEE:** \$20. Make checks payable to Silverfish Review Press. **GUIDELINES:** No restrictions on the kind of poetry or subject matter; no translations. Individual poems may have been previously published elsewhere, but must be acknowledged. Considers simultaneous submissions (notify immediately of acceptance elsewhere). Submit at least 48 pages of poetry, no names or identification on ms pages. Include separate title sheet with poet's name, address and phone number. Include SAS postcard for notification of receipt and SASE for results; no mss will be returned. Accepts e-mail submissions in Word, plain text or rich text; send entry fee and SASE by regular mail. Guidelines available for SASE, by e-mail or on website. **DEADLINE:** October 15 (postmark). 2008 Winner was Eric Gudas (best Western and other poems). Winner announced in March. Copies of winning books available through website. "All entrants who enclose a booksize envelope and \$2.23 in postage will receive a free copy of a recent winner of the book award."

### CAKETRAIN CHAPBOOK COMPETITION

P.O. Box 82588, Pittsburgh PA 15218. **E-MAIL:** caketrainjournal@hotmail.com. **WEBSITE:** www.caketrain.org/competitions. Annual chapbook contest sponsored by *Caketrain* literary journal. **PRIZE:** Winner receives a \$250 cash prize and 25 copies of their chapbook. **ENTRY FEE:** \$15 for reading fee only or \$20 for entry fee and copy of winning chapbook. **GUIDELINES:** Can submit by mail with SASE or by e-mail. See website for guidelines. **DEADLINE:** October 1. Past winners include Elizabeth Skurnick's *Check-In* (2005); Tom Whalen's *Dolls* (2007); Claire Hero's *afterpastures* (2008); Tina May Hall's *All the*

*Day's Sad Stories* (2009); as well as Ben Mirov's *Ghost Machine* (2010).

### CAROLINA WREN PRESS POETRY CONTEST FOR A FIRST OR SECOND BOOK

120 Morris St., Durham NC 27701. (919)560-2738. Fax: (919)560-2759. **E-MAIL:** carolinawrenpress@earthlink.net. **WEBSITE:** www.carolinawrenpress.org. **CONTACT:** Contest Director. **PRIZE:** The biennial Carolina Wren Press Poetry Contest for a first or second book offers \$1,000 and publication by Carolina Wren Press. **ENTRY FEE:** \$20. **GUIDELINES:** Guidelines available for SASE, by e-mail or on website (in September). See guidelines for complete formatting and submission details. Open only to poets who have published no more than 1 full-

length collection (48 pages or more). Submissions must be unpublished as a collection, but individual poems may have been previously published elsewhere. Manuscripts that have been previously self-published or that are available online in their entirety are not eligible. Considers simultaneous submissions (notify immediately of acceptance elsewhere). Submit 2 copies of a poetry ms of 48–60 pages. Page count should include title page, table of contents and optional dedication page. Include SASE for results only; mss will not be returned. Past judges: William Pitt Root, Evie Shockley, Minnie Bruce Pratt. **DEADLINE:** December 1, 2010, 2012, 2014, etc. (postmark). 2010 judge: TBA. Copies of winning books available through website, Amazon or local bookstore.

### HOW TO HANDLE LINE AND STANZA BREAKS IN POEMS

Outside of prose poems, one of the more obvious differences in poetry compared to other types of writing is the line break. In *A Poetry Handbook* (Harcourt), Mary Oliver claims the most important point in a line is the ending and the second most important point is the beginning. I tend to agree with her. In fact, I think the same could be said of stanzas and poems as a whole.

Here are some tips on breaking lines and stanzas:

1. **End lines on natural pauses.** As Ted Kooser writes in *The Poetry Home Repair Manual* (Bison Books), “the closer your writing gets to the pacing of conversational speech, the less it’s likely to call attention to itself.” To accomplish this effect, you could read your poems aloud or even have others do so for you.
2. **End lines on strong nouns or verbs.** The obvious benefit here is that ending lines on strong nouns and/or verbs will propel readers into each next line until they’ve reached the end of the poem.
3. **Avoid ending lines on articles.** Chances are you don’t want the most important point of your line to be occupied by a weak word.
4. **End lines with rhymes.** Rhymes are enjoyable, because they infuse a poem with music. Of course,

poems that bend too much for rhymes can seem silly and/or boring for the reader. So, I don’t advise rhyming just for the sake of rhyming or to do so at the expense of conveying meaning.

5. **Stanza breaks are good for grouping ideas and/or shaping the momentum of a poem.** In Sage Cohen’s *Writing the Life Poetic* (Writer’s Digest Books), she writes, “Line breaks cause the reader to linger an extra beat; the space between stanzas brings the reader to a hard stop.” As a result, poems without stanzas have no hard stops; poems with many short stanzas prompt the reader to continually stop and start.

A good line and stanza breaking exercise would be to write a poem without making any breaks—essentially writing a prose poem. Set the poem aside for a day or longer and then come to it with the objective of breaking lines (and possibly stanzas).

Another good exercise is to take a poem you’ve already written and try breaking the lines in different spots. If your poem contains a lot of short lines, make them longer; if your poem has long lines, shorten them.

—Robert Lee Brewer



**CIDER PRESS REVIEW BOOK AWARD**

777 Braddock Lane, Halifax PA 17032. **E-MAIL:** editor@ciderpressreview.com. **WEBSITE:** ciderpressreview.com. **CONTACT:** Contest director. **PRIZE:** The annual *Cider Press Review* Book Award offers \$1,000, publication and 25 author's copies. *CPR* acquires first publication rights. Initial print run is not fewer than 1,000 copies. **ENTRY FEE:** \$25. All entrants will receive a copy of the winning book and a 1-issue subscription to *Cider Press Review*. **GUIDELINES:** Submissions must be unpublished as a collection, but individual poems may have been previously published elsewhere. Submit book-length ms of 48–80 pages. "Submissions can be made using the submission form on the website or by mail. If sending by mail, include 2 cover sheets—1 with title, author's name and complete contact information; and 1 with title only, all bound with a spring clip. Include SASE for results; manuscripts cannot be returned. Online submissions must be in Word for PC or PDF format, and should not include title page with author's name. The editors strongly urge contestants to use online delivery if possible." 2010 judge: Patricia Smith. **DEADLINE:** Submit September 1–November 30.

**COLORADO PRIZE FOR POETRY**

Center for Literary Publishing, Dept. of English, 9105 Campus Delivery, Colorado State University, Fort Collins CO 80523. (970)491-5449. **E-MAIL:** creview@colostate.edu. **WEBSITE:** coloradoreview.colostate.edu. **CONTACT:** Stephanie G'Schwind, editor. **PRIZE:** The annual Colorado Prize for Poetry awards an honorarium of \$1,500 and publication of a book-length ms. **ENTRY FEE:** \$25; includes 1-year subscription to *Colorado Review*. **GUIDELINES:** Guidelines available for SASE or by e-mail. Submission must be unpublished as a collection, but individual poems may have been published elsewhere. Submit mss of 48–100 pages of poetry (no set minimum or maximum) on any subject, in any form, double- or single-spaced. Include 2 titles pages: 1 with ms title only; the other with ms title and poet's name, address and phone number. Enclosed SAS postcard for notification of receipt and SASE for results; mss will not be returned. **DEADLINE:** Manuscripts will be accepted from October 1, 2009, through the post-

mark deadline of January 14, 2010. The winner will be announced in May 2010.

**DANA AWARD IN POETRY**

200 Fosseway Dr., Greensboro NC 27455. (336)644-8028 (for emergency questions only). **E-MAIL:** danaawards@pipeline.com. **WEBSITE:** www.danaawards.com. **CONTACT:** Mary Elizabeth Parker, award chair. **PRIZE:** Offers annual award of \$1,000 for the best group of 5 poems. **ENTRY FEE:** \$15 for 5 poems. **GUIDELINES:** Guidelines available for SASE, by e-mail or on website. Submissions must be unpublished and not under promise of publication when submitted. Considers simultaneous submissions. Submit 5 poems on any subject, in any form; no light verse. Include separate cover sheet with name, address, phone, e-mail address and titles of poems. Entries by regular mail only. Include SASE for winners list only; no mss will be returned. **DEADLINE:** October 31 (postmark). Winner will be announced in early spring by phone, letter and e-mail.

**DELAWARE DIVISION OF THE ARTS**

820 North French St., Wilmington DE 19801. (302)577-8278. Fax: (302)577-6561. **E-MAIL:** kristin.pleasanton@state.de.us. **WEBSITE:** www.artsdel.org. **CONTACT:** Kristin Pleasanton, art and artist services coordinator. Award "to help further careers of emerging and established professional artists." **PRIZE:** \$10,000 for masters; \$6,000 for established professionals; \$3,000 for emerging professionals. **ENTRY FEE:** None. **GUIDELINES:** Guidelines available after May 1 on website. For Delaware residents only. Judged by out-of-state, nationally recognized professionals in each artistic discipline. Accepts inquiries by e-mail, phone. "Follow all instructions and choose your best work sample." **DEADLINE:** Beginning of August. Results announced in December. Winners notified by mail. Results available on website.

**DIAGRAM/NEW MICHIGAN PRESS  
CHAPBOOK CONTEST**

Dept. of English, P.O. Box 210067, University of Arizona, Tucson AZ 85721. **E-MAIL:** nmp@thediagram.com.

**WEBSITE:** [www.newmichiganpress.com/nmp](http://www.newmichiganpress.com/nmp). **CONTACT:** Ander Monson, editor. **PRIZE:** The annual DIAGRAM/New Michigan Press Chapbook Contest offers \$1,000 plus publication and author's copies, with discount on additional copies. Also publishes 2–4 finalist chapbooks each year. **ENTRY FEE:** \$16. **GUIDELINES:** Guidelines on website. Submit 18–44 pages of poetry, fiction, mixed-genre or genre-bending work (images accepted if b/w and you have permissions). Include SASE. **DEADLINE:** April 1.

### JAMES DICKEY PRIZE FOR POETRY

GeorgiaStateUniversity, P.O. Box 3999, Atlanta GA 30302-3999. **WEBSITE:** [www.webdelsol.com/Five\\_Points](http://www.webdelsol.com/Five_Points). **PRIZE:** The annual James Dickey Prize for Poetry awards \$1,000 and publication in *Five Points*. **ENTRY FEE:** \$20 domestic, \$30 foreign (includes 1-year subscription). Make checks payable to Georgia State University. **GUIDELINES:** Submissions must be unpublished. Submit up to 3 typed poems, no more than 50 lines each. Include name and address on cover sheet. Enclose 2 SASEs: 1 to acknowledge receipt of ms, 1 for results. Guidelines available for SASE or on website. **DEADLINE:** September 1–December 1. Winner announced in the spring.

### EMERGING VOICES

P.O. Box 6037, Beverly Hills CA 90212. (424)258-1180. Fax: (424)258-1184. **E-MAIL:** [ev@penusa.org](mailto:ev@penusa.org); [pen@penusa.org](mailto:pen@penusa.org). **WEBSITE:** [www.penusa.org](http://www.penusa.org). **PRIZE:** Annual program offering \$1,000 stipend and 8-month fellowship to writers in the early stages of their literary careers. Program includes 1-on-1 sessions with mentors, seminars on topics such as editing or working with agents, courses in the Writers' Program at UCLA Extension and literary readings. **ENTRY FEE:** None. **GUIDELINES:** See website for brochure and complete guidelines. Participants selected according to potential and lack of access to traditional publishing and/or educational opportunities. No age restrictions; selection is not based solely on economic need. Participants need not be published, but "the program is directed toward poets and writers of fiction and creative nonfiction with clear ideas of what they hope to accomplish through their writing.

Mentors are chosen from PEN's comprehensive membership of professional writers and beyond." Program gets underway in January. **DEADLINE:** September 5.

### THE ROBERT FROST FOUNDATION ANNUAL POETRY AWARD

(Specialized: poems written in the spirit of Robert Frost) The Robert Frost Foundation, Lawrence Library, 51 Lawrence St., Lawrence MA 01841. (978)725-8828. **E-MAIL:** [frostfoundation@comcast.net](mailto:frostfoundation@comcast.net). **WEBSITE:** [www.frostfoundation.org](http://www.frostfoundation.org). **PRIZE:** Offers annual award of \$1,000. Submissions may be entered in other contests. Submit up to 3 poems of not more than 3 pages each (2 copies of each poem, 1 with name, address and phone number), written in the spirit of Robert Frost. **ENTRY FEE:** \$10/poem. **GUIDELINES:** Guidelines available for SASE and on website. **DEADLINE:** September 15. Competition receives over 600 entries/year. 2008 winner was Elizabeth Klise von Zerneck. Winning poem can be viewed on website.

### KINERETH GENSLE AWARD

Alice James Books, University of Maine at Farmington, 238 Main St., Farmington ME 04938. (207)778-7071. Fax: (207)778-7071. **E-MAIL:** [ajb@umf.maine.edu](mailto:ajb@umf.maine.edu). **WEBSITE:** [www.alicejamesbooks.org](http://www.alicejamesbooks.org). **CONTACT:** Contest coordinator. **PRIZE:** The Kinereth Gensler Award offers \$2,000 and publication by Alice James Books; winners become members of the Alice James Books cooperative, with a 3-year commitment to the editorial board. Entrants must reside in New England, New York or New Jersey. **ENTRY FEE:** \$25/ms. Make checks/money orders payable to Alice James Books. For a free book (does not apply to books not yet published), include an additional 6×9 envelope with \$2.50 in postage attached; write title of selection on back of envelope. **GUIDELINES:** Submissions must be unpublished as a collection, but individual poems may have been previously published elsewhere (in publications of fewer than 48 pages). Submit 2 copies of ms of 50–70 pages, typed single-spaced and paginated, with table of contents and acknowledgments page; bio is optional. Use binder clips; no staples, folders or printer-bound copies. Title page of each ms copy



## HOW TO HANDLE REJECTIONS



Part and parcel of the writing biz are the rejections. You will get them. In fact, you need to get them! Because after you've received a few rejections, it dawns on you that rejections aren't personal.

Instead of looking at rejections as overwhelming obstacles; view them as part of your development as a professional writer. New writers aren't the only ones who receive rejections. Published authors submit manuscripts that garner rejections, too. If you never submit out of fear of rejection, you'll never allow an editor the opportunity to call you with an offer!

Learn to deal with rejections by:

- Not submitting manuscripts too early. If you miss a contest deadline, so be it. There are plenty of others. Like fine wine, your manuscript isn't ready until it has been written, rewritten, critiqued, revised and polished.
- Replacing worry with work. My mother always says that it's hard to worry when you're scrubbing a floor. I find it hard to worry about rejections when I have another manuscript ready to send out the door. So, start on a new project as soon as your manuscript has left the building.
- Never whining, ranting or crying about rejections except to your most trusted writing friends and, perhaps, your spouse. You, especially, never want to complain about rejections to those agents or editors who, potentially, might have one of your manuscripts in their hands someday.

—Candie Moonshower

must include poet's name, address and phone number. Enclose SAS postcard for acknowledgment of receipt of ms, #10 SASE for results; mss will not be returned. Guidelines available for SASE or on website. **DEADLINE:** October 2010. Judges: members of the Alice James Books Editorial Board. Winners announced in December. Copies of winning books available through website.

## THE DONALD HALL PRIZE IN POETRY

AWP, Carty House, Mail Stop 1E3, George Mason University, Fairfax VA 22030-4444. **E-MAIL:** [chronicle@awpwriter.org](mailto:chronicle@awpwriter.org). **WEBSITE:** [www.awpwriter.org](http://www.awpwriter.org). The Association of Writers & Writing Programs (AWP) sponsors an annual competition for the publication of excellent new book-length works: the AWP Award Series, which includes The Donald Hall Prize in Poetry. **PRIZE:** Offers annual award of \$5,000 and publication for the best book-length ms of poetry (book-length defined for poetry as 48 pages minimum of text). **ENTRY FEE:** \$10 (AWP members) or \$25 (nonmembers). Make checks/money orders payable in U.S. dollars only to AWP. **GUIDELINES:** Open to published and unpublished poets alike. "Poems previously published in periodicals are eligible for inclusion in submissions, but manuscripts previously published in their entirety, including self-published, are not eligible. As the series is judged anonymously, no list of acknowledgments should accompany your manuscript. You may submit your manuscript to other publishers while it is under consideration by the Award Series, but you must notify AWP immediately in writing if your manuscript is accepted elsewhere. Your manuscript must be submitted in accordance with the eligibility requirements, format guidelines and entry requirements or it will be disqualified." Complete guidelines, including important formatting information, eligibility requirements and required entry form available on website. **DEADLINE:** Mss must be postmarked between January 1–February 28.

## BEATRICE HAWLEY AWARD

Alice James Books, University of Maine at Farmington, 238 Main St., Farmington ME 04938. (207)778-7071. Fax: (207)778-7071. **E-MAIL:** [ajb@umf.maine.edu](mailto:ajb@umf.maine.edu). **WEBSITE:** [www.alicejamesbooks.org](http://www.alicejamesbooks.org). **CONTACT:** Contest coordinator. **PRIZE:** The Beatrice Hawley Award offers \$2,000 and publication by Alice James Books. Winners have no cooperative membership commitment. "In addition to the winning manuscript, 1 or more additional manuscripts may be chosen for publication." **ENTRY FEE:** \$25/ms. Make checks/money orders payable to Alice James Books (write "Beatrice Hawley Award" on memo line).

**GUIDELINES:** Guidelines available for SASE or on website. Entrants must reside in the U.S. Submissions must be unpublished as a collection, but individual poems may have been previously published elsewhere (in publications of fewer than 48 pages). Submit 2 copies of ms of 50–70 pages, typed single-spaced and paginated, with table of contents and acknowledgments page; bio is optional. Use binder clips; no staples, folders or printer-bound copies. Title page of each ms copy must include poet's name, address and phone number. Include SAS postcard for acknowledgment of receipt of ms, #10 SASE for results only; mss will not be returned. Judges: members of the Alice James Books Editorial Board. **DEADLINE:** December 1 (postmark) for 2010. Winners announced in April. Copies of winning books available through website.

### **TOM HOWARD/JOHN H. REID POETRY CONTEST**

Tom Howard Books, c/o Winning Writers, 351 Pleasant St., PMB 222, Northampton MA 01060-3961. (866)946-9748. Fax: (413)280-0539. **E-MAIL:** johnreid@mail.qango.com. **WEBSITE:** www.winningwriters.com/poetry. **CONTACT:** John Reid, award director. **PRIZE:** Offers annual award of first prize: \$3,000; second prize: \$1,000; third prize: \$400; fourth prize: \$250; 5 High Distinction Awards of \$200 each; and 6 Most Highly Commended Awards of \$150 each. The top 10 entries will be published on the Winning Writers website. **ENTRY FEE:** \$7 (U.S.) for every 25 lines (exclude poem titles and any blank lines from line count). **GUIDELINES:** Submissions may be published or unpublished and may have won prizes elsewhere. Considers simultaneous submissions. Submit poems in any form, style or genre. "There is no limit on the number of lines or poems you may submit." No name on ms pages; type or computer-print on letter-size white paper, single-sided. Submit online or by regular mail. Guidelines available for SASE or on website. **DEADLINE:** December 15–September 30. Competition receives 1,000 entries/year. 2008 winner was Dawn Raymond ("Ghosts"). Winners announced in February at WinningWriters.com. Entrants who provide valid e-mail addresses will also receive notification.

### **THE LYNDA HULL MEMORIAL POETRY PRIZE**

Crazyhorse, Dept. of English, College of Charleston, 66 George St., Charleston SC 29424. (843)953-7740. **E-MAIL:** crazyhorse@cofc.edu. **WEBSITE:** www.crazyhorsejournal.org. **CONTACT:** Prize director. **PRIZE:** The annual Lynda Hull Memorial Poetry Prize offers \$2,000 and publication in *Crazyhorse*. **ENTRY FEE:** \$16/ms for new entrants. Fee includes a 1-year/2 issue subscription to *Crazyhorse*; for each poetry ms entered and fee paid, subscription is extended by 1 year. Make checks payable to *Crazyhorse*; credit card payments also accepted (see website for details). **GUIDELINES:** Guidelines available for SASE or on website. Submissions must be unpublished. Submit online or by mail up to 3 original poems (no more than 10 pages). Include cover page (placed on top of ms) with poet's name, address, e-mail and telephone number; no identifying information on mss (blind judging). Accepts multiple submissions with separate fee for each. Include SAS postcard for notification of receipt of ms and SASE for results only; mss will not be returned. All entries will be considered for publication. **DEADLINE:** September 1–December 15 (postmark). Winners announced by April.

### **JUNIPER PRIZE FOR POETRY**

University of Massachusetts Press, Amherst MA 01003. (413)545-2217. Fax: (413)545-1226. **E-MAIL:** info@umpress.umass.edu. **WEBSITE:** www.umass.edu/umpress. **CONTACT:** Carla Potts. The UMP offers the annual Juniper Prize for Poetry, awarded in alternate years for first and subsequent books. **PRIZE:** Prize includes publication and \$1,500 in addition to royalties. **ENTRY FEE:** \$25. **GUIDELINES:** In even-numbered years, only "subsequent" books will be considered: mss whose authors have had at least 1 full-length book or chapbook (of at least 30 pages) of poetry published or accepted for publication. Self-published work is not considered to lie within this "books and chapbooks" category. In odd-numbered years, only "first books" will be considered: mss by writers whose poems may have appeared in literary journals and/or anthologies but have not been published or accepted for publication in book form. Considers simultaneous submissions, "but if accepted for publication elsewhere, please

notify us immediately. Manuscripts by more than 1 author, entries of more than 1 manuscript simultaneously or within the same year and translations are not eligible." Submit paginated ms of 50–70 pages of poetry, with paginated contents page, credits page and information about previously published books. Include 2 cover sheets: 1 with contact information, 1 without. Manuscripts will not be returned. **DEADLINE:** submit August 1–September 29 (postmark). Winners announced online in April.

### **BARBARA MANDIGO KELLY PEACE POETRY AWARDS**

(805)965-3443. Fax: (805)568-0466. **E-MAIL:** wagingpeace@napf.org. **WEBSITE:** www.wagingpeace.org. **CONTACT:** Contest director. Offers an annual series of awards "to encourage poets to explore and illuminate positive visions of peace and the human spirit." **PRIZE:** Awards \$1,000 to adult contestants, \$200 to youth in each 2 categories (13–18 and 12 and under), plus honorable mentions in each category. **ENTRY FEE:** Adult: \$15 for up to 3 poems; 13–18: \$5 for up to 3 poems; no fee for 12 and under. **GUIDELINES:** Guidelines available for SASE or on website. Submissions must be unpublished. Submit up to 3 poems in any form, unpublished and in English; maximum 30 lines/poem. Send 2 copies; put name, address, e-mail, phone number and age (for youth) in upper right-hand corner of 1 copy of each poem. Title each poem; do not staple individual poems together. "Any entry that does not adhere to *all* of the contest rules will not be considered for a prize. Poets should keep copies of all entries as we will be unable to return them." Judges: a committee of poets selected by the Nuclear Age Peace Foundation. "The Nuclear Age Peace Foundation reserves the right to publish and distribute the award-winning poems, including honorable mentions." **DEADLINE:** July 1 (postmark). Winners will be announced by October 1 by mail and on website. Winning poems from current and past contests are posted on the Foundation's website.

### **THE JAMES LAUGHLIN AWARD**

The Academy of American Poets, 584 Broadway, Suite 604, New York NY 10012. **WEBSITE:** www.poets.org.

The Academy of American Poets, 584 Broadway, Suite 604, New York NY 10012. (212)274-0343. Fax: (212)274-9427. **E-MAIL:** awards@poets.org. Offered since 1954. **CONTACT:** Awards coordinator. **PRIZE:** Offers \$5,000 prize to recognize and support a poet's second book (ms must be under contract to a publisher). **ENTRY FEE:** None. **GUIDELINES:** Form and guidelines available for SASE (in January) or on website. Submissions must be made by a publisher in ms form. The Academy of American Poets purchases copies of the Laughlin Award-winning book for distribution to its members. Poets must be U.S. citizens. Entry form, signed by the publisher, required. **ENTRY DEADLINE:** submissions accepted between January 1–May 15. Winners announced in August.

### **FRANCES LOCKE MEMORIAL POETRY AWARD**

The Bitter Oleander Press, 4983 Tall Oaks Dr., Fayetteville NY 13066-9776. (315)637-3047. **FAX:** (315)637-5056. **E-MAIL:** info@bitteroleander.com. **WEBSITE:** www.bitteroleander.com. **CONTACT:** Paul B. Roth. **PRIZE:** The Frances Locke Memorial Poetry Award offers \$1,000, publication in *The Bitter Oleander* and 5 contributor's copies. **ENTRY FEE:** \$10 for up to 5 poems, \$2 each additional poem. **GUIDELINES:** Guidelines available on website. Submit up to 5 poems, each no more than 2 pages in length, legibly typed or computer generated. Include poet's name, address and phone number or e-mail on each poem. Include a short biography with submission. No e-mail submissions. Include SASE for results only; mss will not be returned. **DEADLINE:** June 15 (postmark). 2008 winner: Samantha Stiers.

### **MANY MOUNTAINS MOVING POETRY BOOK CONTEST**

Many Mountains Moving Press, 1705 Lombard St., Philadelphia PA 19146. **E-MAIL:** editors@mmminc.org. **WEBSITE:** www.mmminc.org. **CONTACT:** Jeffrey Ethan Lee, senior poetry editor. **PRIZE:** The Many Mountains Moving Poetry Book Contest offers \$1,000 and publication of a book-length poetry ms by Many Mountains Moving Press. **ENTRY FEE:** \$25; entitles entrant to discount on a subscription and discounts on any selected

Many Mountains Moving Press books (use order form, available on website). Make checks/money orders payable to Many Mountains Moving Press. **GUIDELINES:** Guidelines available on website. Open to all poets writing in English. More than half of ms may not have been published as a collection, but individual poems and chapbook-length sections may have been previously published if publisher gives permission to reprint. Accepts e-mail submissions (as an attachment, without any identification in the ms itself). Considers simultaneous submissions “if the poet agrees to notify MMM Press of acceptance elsewhere.” Submit 50–100 typed pages of poetry, single- or double-spaced. Include cover letter with ms title, brief bio, poet’s name, address, phone number and e-mail address(es). Poet’s name must not appear anywhere on ms. Acknowledgments may be sent, but are not required. Include SASE for results only; no mss will be returned. **DEADLINE:** August 14 (postmark).

### THE MORTON MARR POETRY PRIZE

Southern Methodist University, P.O. Box 750374, Dallas TX 75275-0374. (214)768-1037. Fax: (214)768-1408. **E-MAIL:** swr@mail.smu.edu. **WEBSITE:** www.smu.edu/southwestreview. **CONTACT:** Prize coordinator. (Specialized: traditional poetry forms.) **PRIZE:** The annual Morton Marr Poetry Prize awards first prize: \$1,000; and second prize: \$500 to a poet who has not yet published a first book of poetry. Winners will be published in *Southwest Review*. **ENTRY FEE:** \$5/poem. **GUIDELINES:** Guidelines available on website. Submit 6 poems in a “traditional” form (e.g., sonnet, sestina, villanelle, rhymed stanzas, blank verse, et al). Include cover letter with poet’s name, address and other relevant information; no identifying information on entry pages. Manuscripts will not be returned. **DEADLINE:** September 30 (postmark).

### THE LENORE MARSHALL POETRY PRIZE

The Academy of American Poets, 584 Broadway, Suite 604, New York NY 10012. (212)274-0343. Fax: (212)274-9427. **E-MAIL:** awards@poets.org. **WEBSITE:** www.poets.org. **CONTACT:** Alex Dimitrov, awards coordinator. **PRIZE:** \$25,000 **ENTRY FEE:** \$25/title. **GUIDELINES:**

Guidelines, required entry form available for SASE or on website. For the most outstanding book of poems published in the U.S. in the previous year. Contest is open to books by living American poets published in a standard edition (40 pages or more in length with 500 or more copies printed). Self-published books are not eligible. Publishers may enter as many books as they wish (books must be submitted in the year after their publication). 4 copies of each book must be submitted and none will be returned. **DEADLINE:** Entries must be submitted between April 1–June 15.

### MISSISSIPPI REVIEW PRIZE

118 College Dr. #5144, Hattiesburg MS 39406-0001. (601)266-4321. **E-MAIL:** rief@mississippireview.com. **WEBSITE:** www.mississippireview.com. **PRIZE:** *The Mississippi Review* offers an annual award of \$1,000 each in poetry and fiction. Winners and finalists comprise 1 issue of *Mississippi Review*. **ENTRY FEE:** \$15/entry. Make checks payable to *Mississippi Review*. Each entrant receives a copy of the prize issue. **GUIDELINES:** Submissions must be unpublished. Submit up to 3 poems/entry (totaling 10 pages or less). No limit on number of entries. Put “MR Prize” plus poet’s name, address, phone number, e-mail address and title(s) on page 1 of entry. Manuscripts will not be returned. **DEADLINE:** submit April 1–October 1 (postmark). Winners announced in January.

### JENNY MCKEAN MOORE WRITER IN WASHINGTON

Dept. of English, George Washington University, Washington DC 20052. (202)994-6515. Fax: (202)994-7915. **E-MAIL:** dmca@gwu.edu. **WEBSITE:** www.gwu.edu/~english. **PRIZE:** Offers fellowship for a visiting lecturer in creative writing, currently about \$55,000 for 2 semesters. Stipend varies slightly from year to year, depending on endowment payout. Teaching duties involve 2 workshops per semester—1 for undergraduate students, the other free to the community. **ENTRY FEE:** None. **GUIDELINES:** Check website for specific genre each year. Apply with résumé and writing sample of 25 pages or fewer. Books may be submitted but will not be returned without SASE. Awarded to writers in different genres each year, typically alter-



nating between poets and fiction writers. **DEADLINE:** November 15.

### THE KATHRYN A. MORTON PRIZE IN POETRY

Sarabande Books, Inc., P.O. Box 4456, Louisville KY 40204. (502)458-4028. **E-MAIL:** info@sarabandebooks.org. **WEBSITE:** www.SarabandeBooks.org. **CONTACT:** Sarah Gorham, editor-in-chief. Member: CLMP. The Kathryn A. Morton Prize in Poetry is awarded annually to a book-length ms (at least 48 pages). **PRIZE:** Winner receives \$2,000, publication and a standard royalty contract. **ENTRY FEE:** \$25. **GUIDELINES:** Guidelines available for SASE, by e-mail or on website. All finalists are considered for publication. Entry form and SASE are required. Accepts simultaneous submissions, but must be notified immediately if manuscript is accepted elsewhere. Competition receives approximately 1,400 entries. "To avoid conflict of interest, students in a degree-granting program or close friends of a judge are ineligible to enter the contest in the genre for which their friend or teacher is serving as judge. Sarabande, as a member of CLMP, complies with its Contest Code of Ethics." **DEADLINE:** Submit January 1–February 15 (postmark) only.

### THE PABLO NERUDA PRIZE FOR POETRY

*Nimrod*, Literary Contest—Poetry, The University of Tulsa, 600 S. College, Tulsa OK 74104. **WEBSITE:** www.utulsa.edu/nimrod. **CONTACT:** Contest coordinator. **PRIZE:** The annual *Nimrod* Literary Awards include The Pablo Neruda Prize for Poetry, which offers a first prize: of \$2,000 and publication in *Nimrod: International Journal of Poetry and Prose*; and a second prize of \$1,000 and publication. *Nimrod* retains the right to publish any submission. **ENTRY FEE:** \$20; includes 1-year subscription (2 issues) to *Nimrod*. Make checks payable to *Nimrod*. **GUIDELINES:** Guidelines available for #10 SASE or on website. Submissions must be unpublished. Work must be in English or translated by original author. Submit 3–10 pages of poetry (1 long poem or several short poems). Poet's name must not appear on ms. Include cover sheet with poem title(s), poet's name, address, phone and fax numbers and e-mail address (poet must have a U.S. address by October of contest

year to enter). Mark "Contest Entry" on submission envelope and cover sheet. Include SASE for results only; mss will not be returned. **DEADLINE:** January 1–April 30 (postmark). Winners will be announced on *Nimrod's* website.

### THE NEW ISSUES POETRY PRIZE

New Issues Poetry & Prose, Dept. of English, Western Michigan University, 1903 W. Michigan Ave., Kalamazoo MI 49008-5331. (269)387-8185. Fax: (269)387-2562. **E-MAIL:** new-issues@wmich.edu. **WEBSITE:** www.wmich.edu/newissues. **PRIZE:** The New Issues Poetry Prize offers \$2,000 plus publication of a book-length ms. **ENTRY FEE:** \$15. Make checks payable to New Issues Poetry & Prose. **GUIDELINES:** Guidelines available for SASE, by fax, by e-mail or on website. Open to "poets writing in English who have not previously published a full-length collection of poems." Considers simultaneous submissions, but New Issues must be notified of acceptance elsewhere. Submit ms of at least 48 pages, typed, single-spaced preferred. Clean photocopies acceptable. Do not bind; use manila folder or metal clasp. Include cover page with poet's name, address, phone number and title of the ms. Also include brief bio and acknowledgments page. No e-mail or fax submissions. Include SAS postcard for notification of receipt of ms and SASE for results only; no mss will be returned. **DEADLINE:** November 30 (postmark).

### NEW LETTERS PRIZE FOR POETRY

*New Letters* Awards for Writers, UMKC, University House, 5101 Rockhill Road, Kansas City MO 64110-2499. **WEBSITE:** www.newletters.org. The annual *New Letters* **PRIZE:** Poetry Prize awards \$1,500 and publication in *New Letters* to the best group of 3–6 poems. **ENTRY FEE:** \$15 for first entry, \$10 for each subsequent entry; includes cost of a 1-year subscription, renewal or gift subscription to *New Letters* (shipped to any address within the U.S.). Make checks payable to *New Letters*. **GUIDELINES:** Guidelines available for SASE or on website. All entries will be considered for publication in *New Letters*. Submissions must be unpublished. Considers simultaneous submissions with notification upon acceptance elsewhere. Accepts multiple entries

with separate fee for each. Submit up to 6 poems (need not be related). Include 2 cover sheets: 1 with poet's name, address, e-mail, phone number, prize category (poetry) and poem title(s); the second with category and poem title(s) only. No identifying information on ms pages. Accepts electronic submissions. Include SASE for notification of receipt of ms and entry number, and SASE for results only (send only 1 envelope if submitting multiple entries); mss will not be returned. "Current students and employees of the University of Missouri-Kansas City, and current volunteer members of the *New Letters* and BkMk Press staff are not eligible." **DEADLINE:** May 18 (postmark). 2009 winner was Heather Bell.

### OHIOANA POETRY AWARD

Ohioana Library Association, 274 E. First Ave., Suite 300, Columbus OH 43201. (614)466-3831. Fax: (614)728-6974. **E-MAIL:** ohioana@ohioana.org. **WEBSITE:** www.ohioana.org. **PRIZE:** The Ohioana Poetry Award of \$1,000. **ENTRY FEE:** None. **GUIDELINES:** Award is given yearly "to an individual whose body of published work has made, and continues to make, a significant contribution to poetry, and through whose work as a writer, teacher, administrator or in community service, interest in poetry has been developed." Authors must be born in Ohio or who have lived in Ohio for at least 5 years." Competition receives several hundred entries. **DEADLINE:** Nominations to be received by December 31. 2009 Ohioana Poetry Award winner was William Greenway (Everywhere at Once). Ohioana Quarterly regularly reviews books by Ohio authors and is available through membership in Ohioana Library Association (\$25/year).

### PEARL POETRY PRIZE

Pearl Editions, 3030 E. Second St., Long Beach CA 90803-5163. (562)434-4523. **E-MAIL:** pearlmag@aol.com. **WEBSITE:** www.pearlmag.com. **CONTACT:** Joan Jobe Smith, Marilyn Johnson and Barbara Hauk, poetry editors. **PRIZE:** The annual Pearl Poetry Prize awards \$1,000, publication and 25 author's copies for a book-length ms. **ENTRY FEE:** \$20 (includes a copy of the win-

ning book). **GUIDELINES:** Guidelines available for SASE or on website. **DEADLINE:** submit May 1–June 30 only.

### THE RICHARD PETERSON POETRY PRIZE

Dept. of English, Mail Code 4503, Faner Hall 2380, Southern Illinois Univ. Carbondale, Carbondale IL 62901. **WEBSITE:** www.craborchardreview.siu.edu. **CONTACT:** Jon Tribble, managing editor. **PRIZE:** The Richard Peterson Poetry Prize offers \$1,500 plus publication in the winter/spring issue of *Crab Orchard Review*. **ENTRY FEE:** \$10/entry (3 poems, 100 line limit per poem, no more than 1 poem per page; poet may submit up to 3 separate entries if not entering the fiction or nonfiction categories of the contest). Each fee entitles entrant to a copy of the winter/spring *Crab Orchard Review* featuring the prize winner; include complete address. Make checks payable to *Crab Orchard Review*. **GUIDELINES:** See guidelines for complete formatting instructions. Guidelines available for SASE or on website. "Submissions must be unpublished original work not under consideration elsewhere, written in English by a U.S. citizen or permanent resident. Name, address, telephone number and/or e-mail address should appear only on the title page of manuscript; author's name should not appear on any subsequent pages. Mark 'poetry' on outside of envelope. Include #10 SASE for notification of winners." **DEADLINE:** See guidelines or check website.

### THE PRAIRIE SCHOONER BOOK PRIZE SERIES

201 Andrews Hall, P.O. Box 880334 University of Nebraska, Lincoln NE 68588-0334. (402)472-0911. Fax: (402)472-9771. **E-MAIL:** jengelhardt2@unl.edu. **WEBSITE:** prairieschooner.unl.edu. **CONTACT:** Contest director. **PRIZE:** The annual Prairie Schooner Book Prize Series offers \$3,000 and publication of a book-length collection of poetry by the University of Nebraska Press; 1 runner-up receives \$1,000. **ENTRY FEE:** \$25. Make checks payable to Prairie Schooner. **GUIDELINES:** Guidelines available for SASE, by e-mail or on website. Individual poems may have been previously published elsewhere. Considers simultaneous submissions if notified immediately of acceptance elsewhere. Submit at least 50 pages of poetry with

acknowledgments page (if applicable). Poet's name should not appear on ms pages. Xeroxed copies are acceptable. Bind with rubber band or binder clip only. Include 2 cover pages: 1 with poet's name, address, phone number and e-mail address; the other with ms title only. Include SAS postcard for acknowledgment of receipt of ms and #10 SASE for results only; mss will not be returned. **DEADLINE:** January 15–March 15 annually. Winners announced online in early July, with results mailed shortly thereafter.

### RATTLE POETRY PRIZE

RATTLE, 12411 Ventura Blvd., Studio City CA 91604. (818) 505-6777. **E-MAIL:** timgreen@rattle.com. **WEBSITE:** www.rattle.com. **PRIZE:** The RATTLE Poetry Prize awards first prize of \$5,000, plus ten \$100 honorable mentions. Additional entries may be offered publication, as well. **ENTRY FEE:** \$18; includes 1-year subscription to RATTLE. Make checks/money orders payable to RATTLE (for credit card entries, see website). **GUIDELINES:** Open to writers worldwide (see website for

### THE IMPORTANCE OF FORM

Attempting poetic forms is an essential step on the path to becoming a good poet. This doesn't mean poets have to write in forms to be considered poets, but there is something important in learning the traditional rules of poetry before bending and breaking them. After all, even most of the best free verse poets had (and have) a sense of form.

Here's the thing: Most early attempts at any poetic form are going to be bad.

The reason behind this is not that forms are horrible or too hard; instead, it's just the simple fact that early attempts are often focused on following the rules of the form. It's like learning anything new.

I have four boys, and I've seen them all go through the process of learning something, getting frustrated with their own limitations and then taking themselves to new levels. Whether it's learning to talk, walk, ride a bicycle, swim, etc., there is always an initial period when you're just focused on completion before you get comfortable.

Here are some reasons why I think poets should learn and play with forms—even if they intend on only writing in free verse:

- \* **Form gives structure to a poem.** Form is the skeleton (and skin) of the poem; the content is the blood and vital organs. Even poets who write free verse should have an idea of how their line breaks affect their readers.
- \* **Form teaches new tricks in conveying meaning.** For instance, I find that I often have to compress

ideas or images to make them fit a certain meter or a rhyme scheme. This forces me out of my comfort zone and ultimately into an area of excessive creativity. The tricks I learn trying to make forms work can then enhance my free verse poems.

- \* **Form is important for the reader.** Even readers of free verse poetry like to think the poet has an idea of what they're doing—and that there is a point (even if the point is that there is no point). Otherwise, why should readers waste their time reading?
- \* **Form adds an extra layer of complexity to the poem.** This does not mean that a bad poem in sonnet form is going to be considered a great poem, but form provides the poem an extra layer of interpretation and investigation for the reader. Layering can help make a poem more challenging and/or more fun to read and ponder.
- \* **Form is fun.** I notice that many poets don't need to be wrestled into writing forms because they see forms for what they are: poetic games. Sure, forms can be challenging, but challenging in the same way as learning to dribble a basketball or finish a crossword puzzle.

I don't think that all poems should be traditional forms, and I don't think all poets should publish traditional forms. One strength of poetry is its diversity. However, I think it's worth the time of all poets to play around with and learn from forms.

—Robert Lee Brewer



special international guidelines). Poems must be written in English (no translations). No previously published poems or works accepted for publication elsewhere. No simultaneous submissions. Submit no more than 4 poems/entry. Multiple entries by a single poet accepted; however, each 4-poem group must be treated as a separate entry with its own cover sheet and entry fee. Include cover sheet with poet's name, address, e-mail address, phone number and poem titles. No contact information should appear on poems. Include SASE for results only; no poems will be returned. Poems also may be entered through online submission on website. Guidelines available by e-mail or on website. Judge: editors of *RATTLE* in blind review. **DEADLINE:** August 1 (postmark). 2009 winner was Lynne Knight (*To the Young Man Who Cried Out*). Winners announced in September.

### SAWTOOTH POETRY PRIZE

**WEBSITE:** [ahsahtapress.boisestate.edu](http://ahsahtapress.boisestate.edu). The Sawtooth Poetry Prize, sponsored by Ahsakta Press, honors a book of original poetry in English by a single author. **PRIZE:** Offers \$1,500 for a book of poems. The winning volume will be published in January 2012 by Ahsakta Press. "In addition to announcements in national publications, the winning book and author will be featured on the Ahsakta website, as will lists of finalists and semi-finalists." **ENTRY FEE:** \$25/ms. Make checks payable to Ahsakta Press. (See website for payment options outside the U.S.) **GUIDELINES:** Guidelines available on website. Translations are not eligible for this award. "Students and former students of Boise State University and of this year's judge may not enter; close friends of the judge are also not considered eligible." Considers simultaneous submissions. Submit 48–100 pages of poetry, single-spaced, printed on 1 side of 8.5×11 or A4 page only. Include SAS postcard for notification of receipt of ms and SASE (#10 business) for results; mss will not be returned. "Entrants will receive a copy of the winning book when it is printed if they include a 7×10 self-addressed mailer with \$3.95 postage. Our books measure 6×8 and will not fit in smaller-sized mailers." **DEADLINE:** Submit January 1–March 1 (postmark). 2008 winner was Barbara Maloutas with *The Whole Marie*. Winner will be announced in May.

### SLOPE EDITIONS BOOK PRIZE

847 Bernardston Road, Greenfield MA 01301. **E-MAIL:** [ethan@slope.org](mailto:ethan@slope.org). **WEBSITE:** [www.SlopeEditions.org](http://www.SlopeEditions.org). **CONTACT:** Christopher Janke, senior editor; and Ethan Paquin, editor-in-chief. **PRIZE:** The Slope Editions Book Prize offers an annual award of \$1,000 and publication of a book-length ms; author copies offered in lieu of royalties. **ENTRY FEE:** \$20; entitles entrant to 1 Slope Editions book. Make checks/money orders payable to Slope Publishing Inc. **GUIDELINES:** Guidelines available by e-mail or on website. Submissions must be unpublished as a collection. Submit 40–90 typed pages, bound only by a clip. Include 2 title pages: 1 with ms title, poet's name, address, phone number and e-mail; and 1 with ms title only. Also include table of contents and acknowledgments page. Do not include SASE or postcards for notification; they will not be returned. **DEADLINE:** March 15.

### THE RICHARD SNYDER MEMORIAL PUBLICATION PRIZE

Ashland Poetry Press, 401 College Ave., Ashland University, Ashland OH 44805. **CONTACT:** Sarah Wells, managing editor. **PRIZE:** Offers annual award of \$1,000 plus book publication in a paper-only edition of 1,000 copies. **ENTRY FEE:** \$25. **GUIDELINES:** Submissions must be unpublished in book form. Considers simultaneous submissions. Submit 50–80 pages of poetry. Competition receives 350 entries/year. **DEADLINE:** April 30 annually. Winners will be announced in *Writer's Chronicle* and *Poets & Writers*. Copies of winning books available from Small Press Distribution, Baker & Taylor and directly from the Ashland University Bookstore online.

### THE SPOON RIVER POETRY REVIEW EDITORS' PRIZE

4241 Dept. of English, Publications Unit, Illinois State University, Normal IL 61790-4241. **WEBSITE:** [www.litline.org/spoon](http://www.litline.org/spoon). **CONTACT:** Kirstin Hotelling Zona, editor. **PRIZE:** *The Spoon River Poetry Review* Editors' Prize awards \$1,000 to 1 winning poem; 2 runners-up will receive \$100 each. Winning poem, runners-up and honorable mentions will be published in the fall issue of *The Spoon River Poetry Review*. **ENTRY FEE:** \$16; includes 1-year subscription or gift subscription.



(Indicate preference and include recipient's name and address.) **GUIDELINES:** Guidelines available for SASE or on website. Submissions must be unpublished. Submit 2 copies of 3 poems, maximum 10 pages total. On each page of 1 copy, only include poet's name, address and phone number. No fax or e-mail submissions. Include SASE for results only; mss will not be returned. **DEADLINE:** May 1.

### WALLACE E. STEGNER FELLOWSHIPS

Creative Writing Program, Stanford University, Stanford CA 94305-2087. (650)725-1208. Fax: (650)723-3679. **E-MAIL:** mpopok@stanford.edu. **WEBSITE:** www.creativewriting.stanford.edu. **CONTACT:** Mary Popek, program administrator. **PRIZE:** Offers 5 fellowships in poetry of \$26,000 plus tuition of over \$7,000/year for promising writers who can benefit from 2 years of instruction and criticism at the writing center. **ENTRY FEE:** None. **GUIDELINES:** Applicants may apply online. "We do not require a degree for admission. No school of writing is favored over any other. Chronological age is not a consideration." Competition receives approximately 600 entries/year for poetry. **DEADLINE:** December 1 (postmark). 2009/10 fellows in poetry were Joshua Edwards, Erica Ehrenberg, Keetje Kuipers, Brittany Perham and Matthew Siegel.

### STEVENS POETRY MANUSCRIPT CONTEST

22614 N. Santiam Hwy., Lyons OR 97358. **E-MAIL:** eberry@wvi.com. **WEBSITE:** www.nfspd.org. **CONTACT:** Eleanor Berry, contest chair. **PRIZE:** National Federation of State Poetry Societies (NFSPS) offers annual award of \$1,000, publication of ms and 50 author's copies. **ENTRY FEE:** \$20 for NFSPS members; \$25 for nonmembers. Make checks/money orders payable to NFSPS. **GUIDELINES:** Guidelines available for SASE or on website. Individual poems may have been previously published in magazines, anthologies or chapbooks, but not the entire ms as a collection. Simultaneous submissions allowed. Submit 48–70 pages of poetry by a single author, typewritten or computer printed, beginning each poem on a new page. Pages numbered, with table of contents, but no author identification anywhere in ms. Include 2 title pages; 1 with no author identification,

the other with name of poet, address, phone number, e-mail address and state poetry society member affiliation, if applicable. No staples or binders; plain manila folder and/or manuscript clip permitted. No illustrations. No disk submissions; no certified or registered mail. Include SASE for results only; mss will not be returned. **DEADLINE:** October 15 (postmark). Winners announced in January following deadline; entrants who include an e-mail address or SASE will be notified of winner. Book will be published by June and sold at annual NFSPS convention and winning poet (if present) will read from it. Copies of books available through NFSPS website.

### THE RUTH STONE PRIZE IN POETRY

Vermont College, 36 College St., Montpelier VT 05602. (802)828-8517. **E-MAIL:** hungermtn@vermontcollege.edu. **WEBSITE:** www.hungermtn.org. **CONTACT:** Miciah Bay Gault, managing editor. **PRIZE:** The annual Ruth Stone Prize in Poetry offers \$1,000 and publication in *Hunger Mountain: The VCFA Journal of the Arts*; 2 honorable mentions receive \$100 and are also published. **ENTRY FEE:** \$20. **GUIDELINES:** Submit up to 3 poems, not to exceed 6 pages. "Include SASE and index card with poem titles and address; do not put name on poems." **DEADLINE:** December 10. Guidelines available for SASE or on website.

### MAY SWENSON POETRY AWARD

Utah State University Press, 7800 Old Main Hill, Logan UT 84322-7800. (435)797-1362. Fax: (435)797-0313. **E-MAIL:** michael.spooner@usu.edu. **WEBSITE:** www.usu.edu. **CONTACT:** Michael Spooner, director. **PRIZE:** The annual May Swenson Poetry Award offers \$1,000 and publication by Utah State University Press for a full-length poetry collection. **ENTRY FEE:** \$25; includes copy of winning book. **GUIDELINES:** Guidelines available on website. No restrictions on form or subject. Submit 50–100 pages of original poetry. Include cover sheet with poet's name and address. Include SASE for results; mss will not be returned. **DEADLINE:** September 30 (postmark). 2009 winner was Jason Whitmarsh (*Tomorrow's Living Room*). See website for latest winners and more information.

**WAR POETRY CONTEST**

Winning Writers, 351 Pleasant St., PMB 222, Northampton MA 01060-3961. (866)946-9748. Fax: (413)280-0539. **E-MAIL:** adam@winningwriters.com. **WEBSITE:** www.winningwriters.com. **CONTACT:** Adam Cohen, award director. **PRIZE:** Offers annual award of first prize: \$2,000; second prize: \$1,200; third prize: \$600; 12 honorable mentions of \$100 each. All prizewinners receive online publication at WinningWriters.com; selected finalists may also receive online publication. **ENTRY FEE:** \$15 for group of 1–3 poems. **GUIDELINES:** Guidelines available for SASE or on website. Submissions must be unpublished. Considers simultaneous submissions. Submit 1–3 poems of up to 500 lines total on the theme of war, any form, style or genre. No name on ms pages, typed or computer-printed on letter-size white paper, single-sided. Submit online or by regular mail. **DEADLINE:** November 15–May 31. Competition receives 650 entries/year. Winners announced on November 15 at WinningWriters.com and in free e-mail newsletter. Entrants who provided valid e-mail addresses will also receive notification.

**THE WASHINGTON PRIZE**

Word Works Washington Prize, Dearlove Hall, Adirondack Community College, 640 Bay Road, Queensbury NY 12804. **E-MAIL:** editor@wordworksd.com; nancellini@aol.com. **WEBSITE:** www.wordworksd.com. **CONTACT:** Nancy White, prize administrator. **PRIZE:** The Washington Prize offers \$1,500 and publication of a book-length ms of original poetry in English by a living American poet (U.S. or Canadian citizen or resident). **ENTRY FEE:** \$25 (includes copy of winning book). Make checks payable to The Word Works and should be drawn from a U.S. bank only. **GUIDELINES:** Submit a ms of 48–64 pages. Include 2 title pages, 1 with and 1 without author information, an acknowledgments page, a table of contents and a cover letter containing a brief bio. Attach acknowledgments and bio to title page with a staple. Use a binder clip to secure the ms. No scripts will be returned. Indicate the information source where you learned about The Washington Prize. Send entries to this address only by first class mail: Nancy White, Word Works Washington Prize Administrator, Dearlove Hall, Adirondack Community College, 640

Bay Road, Queensbury NY 12804. **DEADLINE:** Submit January 15–March 1 (postmark).

**WERGLE FLOMP HUMOR POETRY CONTEST**

Winning Writers, 351 Pleasant St., PMB 222, Northampton MA 01060-3961. (866)946-9748. Fax: (413)280-0539. **E-MAIL:** adam@winningwriters.com. **WEBSITE:** www.winningwriters.com. **CONTACT:** Adam Cohen, award director. **PRIZE:** Offers annual award of first prize: \$1,500; second prize: \$800; third prize: \$400; plus 12 honorable mentions of \$75 each. All prizewinners receive online publication at WinningWriters.com. **ENTRY FEE:** None. **GUIDELINES:** Guidelines available on website. Please read the past winning entries and the judge's comments published at WinningWriters.com. Guidelines are a little unusual—please follow them closely. Submissions may be previously published. Considers simultaneous submissions. Submit 1 humorous poem of any length, in any form, but must be “a humor poem that has been submitted to a ‘vanity poetry contest’ as a joke. See website for examples.” Entries accepted only through website; no entries by regular mail. **DEADLINE:** August 15–April 1. Competition receives about 750 entries/year. 2009 winner was Randy Cousteau. Winners announced on August 15 at WinningWriters.com and in free e-mail newsletter.

**THE WHITE PINE PRESS POETRY PRIZE**

White Pine Press, P.O. Box 236, Buffalo NY 14201. **E-MAIL:** wpine@whitepine.org. **WEBSITE:** www.whitepine.org. **CONTACT:** Dennis Maloney, editor. **PRIZE:** The White Pine Press Poetry Prize offers \$1,000 plus publication for a book-length collection of poems by a U.S. author. **ENTRY FEE:** \$20. Make checks payable to White Pine Press. **GUIDELINES:** Guidelines available for SASE or on website. Submissions must be unpublished as a collection, but individual poems may have been previously published elsewhere. Submit 60–80 pages of poetry, typed, with table of contents. Include cover sheet with poet's name, address, e-mail address and phone number. No e-mail submissions. Include SAS postcard for notification of receipt of ms and SASE for results only; mss will not be returned.

**DEADLINE:** submit July 1–November 30 (postmark). Winning books available from local booksellers and White Pine Press.

### MARJORIE J. WILSON AWARD FOR BEST POEM CONTEST

P.O. Box 250, Chesterfield MO 63006-0250. **E-MAIL:** margiereview@aol.com. **WEBSITE:** www.margiereview.com. **PRIZE:** The Marjorie J. Wilson Award for Best Poem Contest offers \$1,000 and publication in *MARGIE*. All entries will be considered for publication. **ENTRY FEE:** \$15 for 3 poems; \$5 for each additional poem. Make checks payable to *MARGIE*, Inc. **GUIDELINES:** Guidelines available for SASE or on website. Submissions must be unpublished. Considers simultaneous submissions. Submit 3 poems, 60-line limit/poem. Include single cover sheet with poet's name, address, phone number, e-mail (if available) and poem titles. No names should appear on the poems themselves; do not send originals. Include SASE for results only; submissions will not be returned. **DEADLINE:** To be announced.

### WISCONSIN INSTITUTE FOR CREATIVE WRITING FELLOWSHIP

6195B H.C. White Hall, 600 N. Park St, Madison WI 53706. (608)263-3374. **E-MAIL:** rfkuka@wisc.edu. **WEBSITE:** www.creativewriting.wisc.edu. **CONTACT:** Ron Kuka, program coordinator. Fellowship provides time, space and an intellectual community for writers working on first books. **PRIZE:** \$27,000 for a 9-month appointment. Judged by English Department faculty and current fellows. **ENTRY FEE:** \$40, payable to the Department of English. **GUIDELINES:** "Candidates must not yet have published, or had accepted for publication, a book by application deadline." Open to any writer with either an M.F.A. or Ph.D. in creative writing. Please enclose a SASE for notification of results. Applicants should submit up to 10 pages of poetry or 1 story of up to 30 pages and a résumé or vita directly to the program during the month of February. An applicant's name must not appear on the writing sample (which must be in ms form) but

rather on a separate sheet along with address, social security number, phone number, e-mail address and title(s) of submission(s). Candidates should also supply the names and phone numbers of 2 references. Accepts inquiries by e-mail and phone. "Send your best work." Receives approximately 300 applicants a year for each genre. **DEADLINE:** February. Results announced by May 1.

### WORKING PEOPLE'S POETRY COMPETITION

Blue Collar Review, P.O. Box 11417, Norfolk VA 23517. **E-MAIL:** red-ink@earthlink.net. **WEBSITE:** www.partisanpress.org. **PRIZE:** The Working People's Poetry Competition offers \$100 and a 1-year subscription to *Blue Collar Review* and "1 year posting of winning poem on our website. **ENTRY FEE:** \$15 per poem. Make checks payable to Partisan Press. **GUIDELINES:** Guidelines available on website. Poetry should be typed as you would like to see it published, with your name and address on each page. Include cover letter with entry." **DEADLINE:** May 1.

### WRITERS-EDITORS NETWORK INTERNATIONAL WRITING COMPETITION

FloridaFreelanceWritersAssociation, P.O. Box A, North Stratford NH 03590-0167. (603)922-8338. **E-MAIL:** contest@writers-editors.com. **WEBSITE:** www.writers-editors.com. Established 1978. **CONTACT:** Dana K. Cassell, award director. Offers annual awards for non-fiction, fiction, children's literature and poetry. **PRIZE:** Awards for each category are first: \$100 plus certificate; second: \$75 plus certificate; third: \$50 plus certificate; plus honorable mention certificates. **ENTRY FEE:** \$3/poem (members), \$5/poem (nonmembers). **GUIDELINES:** Entry form and guidelines available for SASE or on website. Poetry submissions must be unpublished. Submit any number of poems on any subject in traditional forms, free verse or children's. Competition receives 350–400 entries/year. Competition is judged by writers, librarians and teachers. **DEADLINE:** March 15. Winners will be announced on May 31 by mail and on website. 🏆

JENNIFER BENNER is the assistant editor of *Writing Contests*.

## SCRIPTWRITING CONTESTS & AWARDS

*Here are 49 competitions for writers of screenplays,  
stage plays and musicals.*

**W**hen asked about the value of entering and placing well in screenwriting contests, Mike Kuciak of the management company Samurai MK cut right to the chase: “Placing well in a prominent contest is one of the best ways for beginning writers to generate interest in their work. I go after a lot of semi-and quarter-finalists.” That’s right: Agents and managers in Hollywood are reading up on who’s winning awards and competitions, so the good news is anyone anywhere can get the attention of power players with a dynamite script.

On the following pages, you will find complete listings for 49 contests and awards for writers of screenplays, stage plays and musicals. These contests offer you the opportunity for your work to be judged on the basis of quality alone without the outside factors (like budgets, trends and the marketplace) that sometimes influence publishing decisions. Some focus on form, such as stage musicals for kids or feature-length scripts, while others feature writing on particular themes or topics (such as contests that only want horror screenplays). Chances are, no matter what type of scripts you write, there is a contest or award program that may be a good match for you.

The contests listed here are extremely varied, and some may be small and regional whereas others are national and prestigious. Remember that judges are busy and picky, so follow contest guidelines and verify the details online before you submit. Good luck!

### ABBREVIATIONS

**ISBN:** Industry standard book number **MS.:** Manuscript **MSS.:** Manuscripts **SAS:** Self addressed stamped (as in postcard) **SASE:** Self addressed stamped envelope **TBA:** To be announced



**AAA SCREENPLAY CONTEST**

AAA Screenplay Contest c/o Creative Screenwriting, 6404 Hollywood Blvd. Suite 145, Los Angeles CA 90028. **E-MAIL:** [aaacontest@creativescreenwriting.com](mailto:aaacontest@creativescreenwriting.com). **CONTACT:** Pasha McKenley, contest coordinator. **PRIZE:** \$10,000; second prize is \$2,500 cash. Third prize is \$1,000. The fourth through 10th-place finalists will each receive \$100. Two teleplay winners receive \$500 each and agency consideration. Three "Best Opening" prize winners get \$100 each. **ENTRY FEE:** \$34–65. **GUIDELINES:** "Enter online at our website. Do not send or try to submit scripts to our e-mail address. They will be deleted. No particular genre has an edge. Our winner may be a horror movie about mutant hedgehogs or a biopic on the life of Ivan the Terrible. What our judges are looking for is a great story, compelling characters, and sharp dialogue. We want your best work without regard to genre or budget. Because the contest is geared toward offering access into the world of screenwriting, we do have to limit applicants to those who have made less than \$25,000 on feature options or sales." **DEADLINE:** April 11.

**ACTORS CHOICE AWARDS**

The Screenwriting Conference in Santa Fe, LLC, PO Box 29762, Santa Fe NM 87592. (866)424-1501. Fax: (505)424-8207. **E-MAIL:** [writeon@scsfe.com](mailto:writeon@scsfe.com). **PRIZE:** All 5 winners receive certificates and free submission to the PAGEawards screenwriting competition. In addition, scripts are forwarded to all producers/agents/managers/executives attending The Hollywood Connection component of SCSFe. **ENTRY FEE:** \$25 for the first, \$15 for all others. **GUIDELINES:** All genres. No limit to number of submissions. **DEADLINE:** May 10.

**ALBERTA PLAYWRITING COMPETITION**

Alberta Playwrights' Network, 2633 Hochwald Ave. SW, Calgary AB T3E 7K2 Canada. (403)269-8564. Fax: (403)265-6773. **PRIZE:** Full length: \$3,500 (Canadian); Discovery: \$1,500 (Canadian); plus a written critique, workshop of winning play and possible reading of winning plays at a Showcase Conference. **ENTRY FEE:** \$40 fee (Canadian). **GUIDELINES:** Offered annually for unproduced plays with full-length and Discovery cat-

egories. Discovery is open only to previously unproduced playwrights. Open only to residents of Alberta. **DEADLINE:** March 1 (annually).

**ANNA ZORNIO MEMORIAL CHILDREN'S THEATRE PLAYWRITING COMPETITION**

University of New Hampshire, Dept. of Theatre and Dance, PCAC, 30 Academic Way, Durham NH 03824-3538. (603)862-3044. **E-MAIL:** [mike.wood@unh.edu](mailto:mike.wood@unh.edu). **CONTACT:** Michael Wood. **PRIZE:** Up to \$500. The play is also produced and underwritten as part of the 2013–2014 season by the UNH Department of Theatre. **ENTRY FEE:** None. **GUIDELINES:** "Guidelines and entry forms available online. Open to all playwrights in U.S. and Canada. Offered every 4 years for unpublished well-written plays or musicals appropriate for young audiences with a maximum length of 60 minutes. May submit 1–3 plays. All plays will be performed by adult actors and must be appropriate for a children's audience." **DEADLINE:** March 2, 2012. Winner will be notified on or after December 15, 2012.

**ANNUAL INTERNATIONAL ONE-PAGE PLAY COMPETITION**

Lamia Ink!, P.O. Box 202, Prince Street Station, New York NY 10012. **CONTACT:** Cortland Jessup, founder/artistic director. **PRIZE:** \$200 for the winner; all finalists will be published. **ENTRY FEE:** \$2/play; \$5/3 plays (maximum). **GUIDELINES:** Send SASE for guidelines or visit the website. The competition is a short-form theatrical exercise created to nurture aspiring writers, challenge established writers and encourage a wide range of experimentation. Offered annually for previously published or unpublished 1-page plays. Acquires the rights to publish in our magazine and to be read or performed at the prize awarding festival. "We will publish and award prizes annually, but may not in every year hold a public performance of the finalist plays. In years without a live performance festival we will award prizes via mail and list all finalists on website." Playwright retains copyright. There are 3 rounds of judging with invited judges that change from year to year. There are up to 12 judges for finalists round. **DEADLINE:** March 15.

## ANNUAL NATIONAL PLAYWRITING COMPETITION

Wichita State University, School of Performing Arts, 1845 Fairmount, Box 153, Wichita KS 67260-0153. (316)978-3646. Fax: (316)978-3202. **E-MAIL:** [bret.jones@wichita.edu](mailto:bret.jones@wichita.edu). **CONTACT:** Bret Jones, director of theatre. **PRIZE:** Production by the Wichita State University Theatre. **ENTRY FEE:** None. **GUIDELINES:** The contest will be open to all undergraduate and graduate students enrolled at any college or university in the United States. Please indicate school affiliation. All submissions must be original, unpublished and unproduced. Both full-length and 1-act plays may be submitted. Full length plays in 1 or more acts should be a minimum of 90 minutes playing time. 2 or 3 short plays on related themes by the same author will be judged as 1 entry. The total playing time should be a minimum of 90 minutes. 1-act plays should be a minimum of 30 minutes playing time to a maximum of 60 minutes playing time. Musicals should be a minimum of 90 minutes playing time and must include a CD of the accompanying music. Scripts should contain no more than 4–6 characters and setting must be suitable for an 85-seat black box theatre. Eligible playwrights may submit up to 2 entries per contest year. 1 typewritten, bound copy should be submitted. Scripts must be typed and arranged in professional play script format. 2 title pages must be included: 1 bound and the other unbound. The unbound title page should display the author's name, address, telephone number and e-mail address if applicable. The bound title page should only display the name of the script. Do not include any personal identifying information on the bound title page. Scripts may be submitted electronically to the following web address [bret.jones@wichita.edu](mailto:bret.jones@wichita.edu). Submit in PDF format. Please include ALL information requested for mail in scripts with your electronic submission. Judging will be conducted by a panel of 3 or more selected from the school faculty and may also include up to 3 experienced, faculty-approved WSU School of Performing Arts students. **DEADLINE:** January 16.

## APPALACHIAN FESTIVAL OF PLAYS & PLAYWRIGHTS

Barter Theatre, Box 867, Abingdon VA 24212-0867. (276)619-3316. Fax: (276)619-3335. **E-MAIL:** [apfesti](mailto:apfesti)

[val@bartertheatre.com](mailto:val@bartertheatre.com). **CONTACT:** Nick Piper. **PRIZE:** \$250, a staged reading performed at Barter's Stage II theater and some transportation compensation and housing during the time of the festival. There may be an additional award for the best staged readings. **ENTRY FEE:** Contact for information. **GUIDELINES:** With the annual Appalachian Festival of New Plays & Playwrights, Barter Theatre wishes to celebrate new, previously unpublished/unproduced plays by playwrights from the Appalachian region. If the playwrights are not from Appalachia, the plays themselves must be about the region. **DEADLINE:** March 31.

## BUNTVILLE CREW'S PRIX HORS PAIR

Buntville Crew, 118 N. Railroad Ave., Buckley IL 60918-0445. **E-MAIL:** [buntville@yahoo.fr](mailto:buntville@yahoo.fr). **WEBSITE:** [www.buntville@yahoo.com](http://www.buntville@yahoo.com). **CONTACT:** Steven Packard, artistic director. **PRIZE:** \$200 and possible production in Buckley and/or New York City. **ENTRY FEE:** \$8. **GUIDELINES:** "Annual award for unpublished/unproduced play script of 15 pages or fewer. Plays may be in English, French, German or Spanish (no translations, no adaptations). Submit 1 copy of the script in standard play format, a résumé and a SASE (scripts will not be returned). Include name, address and telephone number." Judged by panel selected by the theater. **DEADLINE:** May 31.

## CITA PLAY DEVELOPMENT CONTEST

Christians in Theatre Arts, P.O. Box 26471, Greenville SC 29616. **E-MAIL:** [admin@cita.org](mailto:admin@cita.org). **PRIZE:** The winning playwright will be published in a special edition of the organization's journal and a copy will be sent to a list of faith-based professional companies and universities. **ENTRY FEE:** \$25–100/entry depending on level of feedback. **GUIDELINES:** See website for guidelines. Competition encourages and equips writers by providing the winner with a high-quality intensive dramaturgical experience. Plays must be full-length (75 minutes or more) and reflect the author's Judeo-Christian worldview. Musicals must include a tape/CD. **DEADLINE:** February.

## THE CLAYMORE DAGGER AWARD

Killer Nashville, P.O. Box 680686, Franklin TN 37068-0686. (615)599-4032. **E-MAIL:** [contact@killernash](mailto:contact@killernash)

ville.com. **CONTACT:** Clay Stafford, event founder. **PRIZE:** An engraved dagger and consideration for publication by the judging publisher. **ENTRY FEE:** \$35. **GUIDELINES:** “Although anyone with an unpublished ms is eligible to submit, the award would best benefit authors who have not been previously published and published authors who are between publishers and would like to get some buzz about their new works. We don’t want to exclude anyone, though, so if you’re a published author with an unpublished ms you’d like to enter, please be our guest.” The Claymore Dagger Award is Killer Nashville’s award for the best opening for an unpublished ms submitted to the judging committee. A committee of experienced readers and writers will review all submissions in a blind judging process. They will recommend and submit 10 mss to our sponsor publisher, whose editors will make the final decision and award the Claymore Dagger to the winning author. All decisions are final and at the sole discretion of the publisher. **DEADLINE:** 4 months prior to the Killer Nashville conference, which is held annually on the weekend surrounding the third Saturday in August.

### **CREATIVE WORLD AWARDS (CWA) INTERNATIONAL SCREENWRITING COMPETITION**

International Screenwriting Contests, PO Box 10699, Marina del Rey CA 90295. **E-MAIL:** info@creativeworldawards.com. **WEBSITE:** www.creativeworldawards.com. **CONTACT:** Marlene Neubauer/Heather **PRIZE:** More than \$15,000 in cash and prizes awarded in 10 categories. **ENTRY FEE:** \$45–65. **GUIDELINES:** See website’s FAQ page for more detailed information. Waters. “CWA’s professionalism, industry innovation and exclusive company list make this competition a leader in the industry. Several past entrants have gotten optioned and several more are in negotiation. Newly added categories for short film scripts and television. Check out our website for more details.” All screenplays must be in English and in standard spec screenplay format. **DEADLINE:** June 30.

### **DUBUQUE FINE ARTS PLAYERS ANNUAL ONE-ACT PLAY CONTEST**

Dubuque Fine Arts Players, 1686 Lawndale, Dubuque IA 52001. **E-MAIL:** gary.arms@clarke.edu. **WEBSITE:**

www.dbqoneacts.org. **CONTACT:** Gary Arms. **PRIZE:** First place: \$600; second place: \$300; third place: \$200. 5 groups who read all the plays; each play is read at least twice. Plays that score high enough enter the second round. The top 10 plays are read by a panel consisting of 3 directors and 2 other final judges. **ENTRY FEE:** \$10. **GUIDELINES:** “Guidelines and application form for SASE. We select 3 one-act plays each year. We award cash prizes of up to \$600 for a winning entry. We produce the winning plays in August. Offered annually for unpublished and unproduced work.” **DEADLINE:** January 31.

### **FEATURE LENGTH SCREENPLAY COMPETITION**

Austin Film Festival, 1801 Salina St., Austin TX 78702. (512)478-4795. Fax: (512)478-6205. **E-MAIL:** screenplaydirector@austinfilmfestival.com. **PRIZE:** \$5,000 for comedy and drama; \$2,500 for sponsored and sci-fi. **ENTRY FEE:** \$40/early entry; \$50/late entry. **GUIDELINES:** Guidelines for SASE or call (800)310-3378. The writer must hold the rights when submitted; work must be original and not under option. The screenplay must be feature-length and in industry standard format. Offered annually for unproduced screenplays. The Austin Film Festival is looking for quality screenplays which will be read by industry professionals. This year AFF will be providing ‘Readers Notes’ to all Second Rounders (top 10%) and higher for no additional charge. Two main categories: drama and comedy. Two optional award categories (additional entry of \$20 per category); sponsored award and sci-fi award. **DEADLINE:** May 15 (early); June 1 (late).

### **SHUBERT FENDRICH MEMORIAL PLAYWRITING CONTEST**

Pioneer Drama Service, Inc., P.O. Box 4267, Englewood CO 80155. (303)779-4035. Fax: (303)779-4315. **E-MAIL:** submissions@pioneerdrama.com. **CONTACT:** Lori Conary, assistant editor. **PRIZE:** \$1,000 royalty advance and publication. **ENTRY FEE:** None. **GUIDELINES:** Offered annually for unpublished, but previously produced, submissions to encourage the development of quality theatrical material for educational and community theater. Rights acquired only if published. Authors already pub-

lished by Pioneer Drama are not eligible. Contest submissions must also meet standard submission guidelines. **DEADLINE:** December 31 (postmarked).

### FESTIVAL OF NEW AMERICAN PLAYS

Firehouse Theatre Project, 1609 W. Broad St., Richmond VA 23220. (804)355-2001. **E-MAIL:** info@firehousetheatre.org. **WEBSITE:** www.firehousetheatre.org. **CONTACT:** Carol Piersol, artistic director. **PRIZE:** First place: \$1,000 and a staged reading; second place: \$500 and a staged reading. **ENTRY FEE:** None. **GUIDELINES:** “Annual contest designed to support new and emerging American playwrights. Scripts must be full-length and previously unpublished/unproduced. (Readings are acceptable if no admission was charged.) Submissions should be mailed in standard manuscript form with no fancy binding. No disks, no e-mails. Scripts should be secured with a binder clip only. All author information must be on a title page separate from the body of the manuscript and no reference to the author is permitted in the body of the script. Scripts must be accompanied by a letter of

recommendation from a theater company or individual familiar with your work. Letters of recommendation do not need to be specific to the play submitted; they may be general recommendations of the playwright’s work. All letters must be received with the script, not under separate cover. Scripts received without a letter will not be considered. Due to the volume of mail, manuscripts cannot be returned. All American playwrights welcome to submit their work.” All plays are initially read by a panel of individuals with experience in playwriting and literature. Previous judges have included Lloyd Rose (former *Washington Post* theatre critic), Bill Patton (frequent Firehouse director), Richard Toscan (dean of the Virginia Commonwealth University School for the Arts) and Israel Horovitz (playwright). All finalists are asked to sign a contract with the Firehouse Theatre Project that guarantees performance rights for the staged reading in January and printed credit for Firehouse Theatre Project if the play is produced or published in the future. **DEADLINE:** June 30 postmark.

## 3 PRACTICALITIES OF PLAYWRITING

**1. CAST SIZE.** Cast size should always be on your mind. Musicals, children’s theater, and big-budget productions aside, theaters will usually look for plays with small cast sizes. A small cast requires less money for actors (especially when you’re dealing with unions) and less hassle in getting people together for rehearsals. An old playwriting joke tells of a meeting between a writer and a producer. The producer asks, “How many actors will be needed for this play?” The writer responds, “That’s the good news. Just one!” The producer pauses and says, “See if you cut that number down, then call me back.” Keep in mind that what’s important here is a small cast size, not a small number of roles. David Lindsay-Abaire’s play, *Wonder of the World*, for example, requires seven actors, but has many more characters than that.

**2. EMBRACING SIMPLICITY.** “When you have a scene, you have to write with the practicalities of the theater in mind,” says Ted Swindley, creator of the musical *Always ...*

*Patsy Cline.* “Plays are not movies. You can’t say, ‘Scene 1: The Peer at Lake Michigan; Scene 2: A Skyscraper Penthouse; Scene 3: Central Park.’ That is a nonrealistic play. A producer would say ‘This has got too many characters, it’s too many costumes, it’s got too many props.’”

**3. LIMITING DIRECTIONS AND DESCRIPTION.** Stage plays are not a medium where you can describe action in depth. For example, if two characters fight, simply say, “They fight.” Ideally, your play will be produced many times on many different stages—and the directors that tackle your work will not want to put on the exact same interpretation of another director; same goes for the actors. Directors will often black out some or all of a play’s stage directions, so they can create their own vision of how to block the action. An excess of stage directions is a sign of an amateur.

—Excerpted from 2010 Screenwriter’s & Playwright’s Market by Chuck Sambuchino





### JOHN GASSNER MEMORIAL PLAYWRITING COMPETITION

New England Theatre Conference, 215 Knob Hill Dr., Hamden CT 06158. Fax: (203)288-5938. **E-MAIL:** mail@netconline.org. **PRIZE:** First place: \$1,000; second place: \$500. **ENTRY FEE:** \$10 fee. **GUIDELINES:** "We annually seek unpublished full-length plays and scripts. Open to all. Playwrights living outside New England may participate." **DEADLINE:** April 15.

### GOTHAM SCREEN FILM FESTIVAL AND SCREENPLAY CONTEST

291 Broadway, Suite 701, New York NY 10007. **E-MAIL:** info@gothamscreen.com. **PRIZE:** \$2,500. In addition, excerpts from selected contest entries will be performed live by professional actors at a staged reading during the festival. **ENTRY FEE:** \$35–50. **GUIDELINES:** Drama, comedy, adventure, horror, thriller/suspense, family, romantic comedy, documentary. "Submit via Withoutabox account or download form at website." "The contest is open to anyone. Feature-length screenplays should be properly formatted and have an approximate length of 80–120 pages. On the cover page, please put the title, the writer's name(s) and the contact details." "Include an e-mail address to be notified." **DEADLINE:** September.

### AURAND HARRIS MEMORIAL PLAYWRITING AWARD

The New England Theatre Conference, Inc., 215 Knob Hill Dr., Hamden CT 06518. Fax: (203)288-5938. **E-MAIL:** mail@netconline.org. **PRIZE:** First place: \$1,000; second place: \$500. **ENTRY FEE:** \$10 fee. **GUIDELINES:** "Offered annually for an unpublished full-length play for young audiences. Guidelines available online or for SASE. No phone calls, please. Open to all." **DEADLINE:** May 1.

### HENRICO THEATRE COMPANY ONE-ACT PLAYWRITING COMPETITION

Henrico Recreation & Parks, P.O. Box 90775, Richmond VA 23273. (804)501-5138. Fax: (804)501-5284. **E-MAIL:** per22@co.henrico.va.us. **CONTACT:** Amy A. Perdue. **PRIZE:** \$300; runner-up: \$200. Winning entries may be produced; videotape sent to author. **ENTRY FEE:** None.

**GUIDELINES:** "Offered annually for previously unpublished or unproduced plays or musicals to produce new dramatic works in 1-act form. Scripts with small casts and simpler sets given preference. Controversial themes and excessive language should be avoided." **DEADLINE:** July 1.

### HOLIDAY SCREENPLAY CONTEST

P.O. Box 450, Boulder CO 80306. (303)629-3072. **E-MAIL:** Cherubfilm@aol.com. **WEBSITE:** www.HolidayScreenplayContest.com. **PRIZE:** Up to \$500. **ENTRY FEE:** \$30. **GUIDELINES:** "Scripts must be centered on a holiday (any world holiday you would like to feature). This contest is limited to the first 400 entries." Screenplays must be in English. Screenplays must not have been previously optioned, produced or purchased prior to submission. Multiple submissions are accepted, but each submission requires a separate online entry and separate fee. Screenplays must be between 90–125 pages. **DEADLINE:** November.

### HORROR SCREENPLAY CONTEST

Cherub Productions, P.O. Box 540, Boulder CO 80306. (303)629-3072. **E-MAIL:** Cherubfilm@aol.com. **PRIZE:** More than \$5,000 in cash and prizes. **ENTRY FEE:** \$35. **GUIDELINES:** "This contest is looking for horror scripts." This contest is limited to the first 600 entries. Screenplays must be between 90–125 pages. **DEADLINES:** E-mail for deadline.

### LAS VEGAS INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL SCREENPLAY COMPETITION

Las Vegas International Film Festival, 10300 W. Charleston Blvd., Las Vegas NV 89135. (702)552-9330. **E-MAIL:** info@lvfilmfest.com. **WEBSITE:** www.lvfilmfest.com/Filmmakers/Screenplay\_Competition.aspx. **PRIZE:** Cash prizes are awarded to the first, second, and third place winners. **ENTRY FEE:** \$30. **GUIDELINES:** "This annual screenplay competition was created to help aspiring screenwriters break into the entertainment industry as well as to support emerging new talent." Scripts may be submitted via hardcopy or electronic file. Scripts should be no longer than 180 pages. **DEADLINE:** See website.

## MOONDANCE INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL

970 9th St., Boulder CO 80302. (303)545-0202. **E-MAIL:** [director@moondancefilmfestival.com](mailto:director@moondancefilmfestival.com). **PRIZE:** Winners are presented with a unique star award. In addition, Moondance promotes the winners' and finalists' work and tries to get it sold, agented, distributed or optioned. Winners' & selected finalists' films are screened at the Moondance film festival. **ENTRY FEE:** \$50–75. **GUIDELINES:** Contest invites submissions of feature screenplays, short screenplays, feature & short musical screenplays, feature & short screenplays for children, 1, 2 or 3-act stageplays, mini-series for TV, television movies of the week, television pilots, libretti, musical film scripts, short stories, radio plays & short stories for children. To submit your work, go to [www.withoutabox.com/login/1240](http://www.withoutabox.com/login/1240). **DEADLINE:** May 15.

## MOVING ARTS PREMIERE ONE-ACT COMPETITION

Moving Arts, P.O. Box 481145, Los Angeles CA 90048. (323)666-3259. **E-MAIL:** [info@movingarts.org](mailto:info@movingarts.org). **CONTACT:** Steve Lozier. **PRIZE:** First place: \$200, plus a full production during festival; finalists get program mention and possible production. **ENTRY FEE:** \$10 fee/script. **GUIDELINES:** Please see website for additional guidelines before submitting. Offered annually for unproduced 1-act plays in the Los Angeles area (single set; maximum cast of 8 people recommended). All playwrights are eligible except Moving Arts resident artists. No more than 60 pages. "We have a blind submission policy. The playwright's name should appear only on the cover letter and not on the script." Scripts are not returned. **DEADLINE:** See website.

## NATIONAL CHILDREN'S THEATRE FESTIVAL

Actors' Playhouse at the Miracle Theatre, 280 Miracle Mile, Coral Gables FL 33134. (305)444-9293, ext. 615. Fax: (305)444-4181. **E-MAIL:** [maulding@actorsplayhouse.org](mailto:maulding@actorsplayhouse.org). **CONTACT:** Earl Maulding. **PRIZE:** \$500 and full production. **ENTRY FEE:** \$10 fee. **GUIDELINES:** "Offered annually for unpublished musicals for young audiences. Target age is 4–12. Script length should be 45–60 minutes. Maximum of 8 actors to play any num-

ber of roles. We prefer settings that lend themselves to simplified scenery. Bilingual (English/Spanish) scripts are welcomed. Call or visit website for guidelines. Open to any writer." **DEADLINE:** April 1.

## NEW WORKS FOR THE STAGE

COE College Theatre Arts Dept., 1220 First Ave. NE, Cedar Rapids IA 52402. (319)399-8624. Fax: (319)399-8557. **E-MAIL:** [swolvert@coe.edu](mailto:swolvert@coe.edu). **CONTACT:** Susan Wolvert. **PRIZE:** \$500, plus travel, room and board for residency at the college. **ENTRY FEE:** Contact for information. **GUIDELINES:** Offered in odd-numbered years to encourage new work, to provide an interdisciplinary forum for the discussion of issues found in new work and to offer playwright contact with theater professionals who can provide response to new work. Full-length, original, unpublished and unproduced scripts only. No musicals, adaptations, translations or collaborations. Submit 1-page synopsis, résumé and SASE if the script is to be returned. **DEADLINE:** November 1 even years.

## DON AND GEE NICHOLL FELLOWSHIPS IN SCREENWRITING

Academy of Motion Picture Arts & Sciences, 1313 N. Vine St., Hollywood CA 90028-8107. (310)247-3010. **E-MAIL:** [nicholl@oscars.org](mailto:nicholl@oscars.org). **WEBSITE:** [www.oscars.org/nicholl](http://www.oscars.org/nicholl). **PRIZE:** Up to five \$30,000 fellowships awarded each year. **ENTRY FEE:** \$45 fee if by April 1. **GUIDELINES:** "Offered annually for unproduced screenplays to identify talented new screenwriters. Open to writers who have not earned more than \$5,000 writing for films or TV." **DEADLINE:** May 1.

## NICKELODEON WRITING FELLOWSHIP

Nickelodeon, 231 W. Olive Ave., Burbank CA 91502. (818)736-3663. **E-MAIL:** [info.writing@nick.com](mailto:info.writing@nick.com). **WEBSITE:** [www.nickwriting.com](http://www.nickwriting.com). **CONTACT:** Karen Kirkland, contest/award director. **PRIZE:** The Fellowship provides a salaried position for up to 1 year and offers hands-on experience writing spec scripts and pitching story ideas in both live action and animation television. **ENTRY FEE:** None. **GUIDELINES:** Offered annually for unpublished scripts. You must be 18 years or older to participate. U.S. domestic applicants only. All spec scripts must include a cover

page listing the show name and show title, along with your name, address and telephone number (please do not put your name on every page). If you have previously applied to the program and have not been selected as a fellow, you are welcomed and encouraged to apply again, however you are required to submit a different spec script for each new submission period. See guidelines online at our website. Submissions that do not adhere to our guidelines will not be considered. As part of their scriptwriting, each fellow will be assigned to an executive in charge of production and have an opportunity to write a spec script for an on-air Nickelodeon show. In addition, all fellows are integrated into the activities of both the development and production departments. This allows the fellows an opportunity to attend storyboard pitches, notes meetings, records, table reads, show pitches and show tapings, all while being exposed to top creators and key production crews. Appropriate spec scripts must be: comedic, live action, or animation; based on a half-hour television series; currently being produced for primetime network or cable; typed in standard script format; in black ink; in 12-pt. Courier style font; on 8.5×11, 3-hole punched white paper; with only 2 brass fasteners (top & bottom). Experienced readers and Nickelodeon Development and Production employees and executives read all submissions. **DEADLINE:** February 28, 2011.

### THE PAGE INTERNATIONAL SCREENWRITING AWARDS

The PAGE Awards Committee, 7510 Sunset Blvd., #610, Hollywood CA 90046-3408. **E-MAIL:** info@PAGEawards.com. **CONTACT:** Zoe Simmons, contest coordinator. **PRIZE:** Over \$50,000 in cash and prizes, including a \$25,000 grand prize, plus gold, silver and bronze prizes in all 10 categories. Most importantly, the award-winning writers receive extensive publicity and industry exposure. **ENTRY FEE:** \$39 (early); \$49 (regular); \$59 (late). **GUIDELINES:** Annual competition to discover the most talented new screenwriters from across the country and around the world. “Each year, awards are presented to 31 screenwriters in 10 different genre: action/adventure, comedy, drama, family film, historical film, science fiction, thriller/horror, short film script, TV drama pilot and TV sitcom pilot. Guidelines and entry forms are

online. The contest is open to all writers 18 years of age and older who have not previously earned more than \$25,000 writing for film and/or television. Please visit contest website for a complete list of rules and regulations.” Judging is done entirely by Hollywood professionals, including industry script readers, consultants, agents, managers, producers and development executives. Entrants retain all rights to their work. **DEADLINE:** January 15 (early); March 1 (regular); April 1 (late).

### THE PEN IS A MIGHTY SWORD

The Virtual Theatre Project, 1901 Rosalia Rd., Los Angeles CA 90027. (877)787-8036. Fax: (323)660-5097. **E-MAIL:** pen\_sword2010\_2011@yahoo.com. **CONTACT:** Kim Terrell, producing artistic director. **PRIZE:** First place: \$2,000 and promotion for production; second place: \$1,000; third place: \$500 and a reading. In addition, up to 7 honorable mentions receive \$100 each. **ENTRY FEE:** None for mailed submissions, \$25 processing fee for e-mailed entries. **GUIDELINES:** “Contest open to unproduced plays written specifically for the stage. Plays should be bold, compelling and passionate. See website for submission dates and guidelines.” Judged by a panel of professional writers, directors and producers. **DEADLINE:** E-mail for deadline.

### PILGRIM PROJECT GRANTS

c/o First Things, 35 East 21st St., 6th Floor, New York NY 10010. (212)627-2288. Fax: (212)627-2184. **E-MAIL:** davida@firstthings.com. **CONTACT:** Davida Goldman. **PRIZE:** Grants of \$1,000–7,000. **ENTRY FEE:** None. **GUIDELINES:** E-mail for more information. “Grants for a reading, workshop production or full production of plays that deal with questions of moral significance.” **DEADLINE:** Ongoing.

### RHODE ISLAND INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL SCREENPLAY COMPETITION

P.O. Box 162, Newport RI 02840. (401)861-4445. Fax: (401)490-6735. **E-MAIL:** georget@film-festival.org. **WEBSITE:** www.film-festival.org/enterascreenplay.php. **PRIZE:** Cash prizes and trophies **ENTRY FEE:** \$40.00 (full-length) or \$25.00 (teleplay/short) must accompany each submission. For all scripts arriving after the standard dead-

line, a \$10 late fee will be imposed per script. **GUIDELINES:** The purpose of the contest is to promote, embolden and cultivate screenwriters in their quest for opportunities in the industry. The Rhode Island International Film Festival is calling for Screenplay Entries for its 15th annual festival, which takes place August 2011 in historic Providence, Rhode Island. The Festival is accepting screenplays in all genres. Screenplays must have been written after 2007. Scripts not to exceed 130 pages. Prefers paperless entries. Go online for downloadable entry form. "Screenplays will be judged on creativity, innovation, vision, originality and the use of language. The key element is that of communication and how it complements and is transformed by the language of film." **DEADLINE:** July 15.

### **SCRIPTAPALOOZA SCREENPLAY COMPETITION**

Supported by Writers Guild of America West Registry, the Writers Guild of Canada and Write Brothers, 7775 Sunset Blvd., #200, Hollywood CA 90046. (323)654-5809. **E-MAIL:** info@scriptapalooza.com. **WEBSITE:** www.scriptapalooza.com. **CONTACT:** Mark Andrushko, pres. **PRIZE:** First place: \$10,000 and software package from Write Brothers, Inc.; second place, third place and 10 runners-up: software package from Write Brothers, Inc. The top 100 scripts will be considered by more than 90 production companies. **ENTRY FEE:** \$40 (early); \$50 (regular); \$55 (late). **GUIDELINES:** "Annual competition for unpublished scripts from any genre. Open to any writer, 18 or older. Submit 1 copy of a 90- to 130-page screenplay. Body pages must be numbered, and scripts must be in industry-standard format. All entered scripts will be read and judged by more than 90 production companies." **DEADLINE:** January 7 (early), March 5 (regular), April 15 (late).

### **SCRIPTAPALOOZA TELEVISION WRITING COMPETITION**

7775 Sunset Blvd., PMB #200, Hollywood CA 90046. (323)654-5809. **E-MAIL:** info@scriptapalooza.com. **PRIZE:** First place: \$500; second place: \$200; third place: \$100 (in each category). **ENTRY FEE:** \$40. **GUIDELINES:** "Biannual competition accepting entries in 4 categories: reality shows, sitcoms, original pilots and 1-hour

dramas. There are more than 25 producers, agents and managers reading the winning scripts. 2 past winners won Emmys because of Scriptapalooza and 1 past entrant now writes for Comedy Central." **DEADLINE:** October 15 and April 15.

### **SCRIPT PIMP SCREENWRITING COMPETITION**

Script P.I.M.P. (Pipeline Into Motion Pictures), 8033 Sunset Blvd., Hollywood CA 90046. (310)401-1155. Fax: (310)564-2021. **E-MAIL:** comp@scriptpimp.com. **CONTACT:** Matt Misetich, general manager. **PRIZE:** \$20,000 in cash for the winners; \$80,000 in prizes to anyone who enters a panel of working literary agents, literary managers and development directors from the film industry. **ENTRY FEE:** \$50. **GUIDELINES:** Open to writers 18 years and older. All genres, styles and formats accepted. The Script Pimp 8th Annual Screenwriting and 3rd Annual TV Writing Competitions are open for entries. This is an international competition open to all original feature film screenplays that have yet to be produced, optioned or sold. Over 200 companies review the finalists, and previous winners have gone on to secure studio writing assignments, gain representation and see their work optioned. Each screenplay is guaranteed 2 reads from the panel of judges. Script P.I.M.P. does not acquire any rights to materials submitted through the contest. **DEADLINE:** May 1.

### **SCRIPT SAVVY'S MONTHLY SCREENPLAY CONTEST**

Script Savvy, (214)546-8686. **E-MAIL:** info@scriptsavvy.net. **CONTACT:** Donna White, coordinator. **PRIZE:** Script Savvy Monthly Screenplay Contest offers over \$1,500 in cash and prizes every month and is designed to give the author maximum industry exposure. **ENTRY FEE:** \$39 for basic entry; \$59 for entry with standard feedback; \$99 for entry with full analysis. **GUIDELINES:** "Visit the website for online submission instructions. No guidelines or entry forms are available for SASE." Submissions are never-optioned/unproduced feature-length screenplays only. International entries accepted, but scripts must be in English. Visit the website for complete details. "Winners are recommended to our producer sponsors



for production consideration and given industry exposure. Our judges are industry professionals from production companies and agencies.” **DEADLINE:** The last day of each month. It is the same each year.

### REVA SHINER COMEDY AWARD

Bloomington Playwrights Project, 107 W. 9th St., Bloomington IN 47404. **E-MAIL:** literarymanager@newplays.org. **CONTACT:** Josie Gingrich, literary manager. **PRIZE:** \$1,000, full production as a part of the Mainstage season. **ENTRY FEE:** \$10 reading fee (waived for Dramatist Guild members and agent-submitted scripts); scripts will not be returned. **GUIDELINES:** Annual award for unpublished/unproduced plays. The Bloomington Playwrights Project is a script-developing organization. Winning playwrights are expected to become part of the development process, working with the director in person or via long-distance. Please check the website for more details. **DEADLINE:** October 31.

### SHRIEKFEST HORROR/SCI-FI FILM FESTIVAL & SCREENPLAY COMPETITION

PO Box 920444, Sylmar CA 91392. **E-MAIL:** shriekfest@aol.com. **WEBSITE:** www.shriekfest.com. **CONTACT:** Denise Gossett/Todd Beeson. **PRIZE:** Trophies, product awards, usually cash. **ENTRY FEE:** \$25–55. **GUIDELINES:** “We accept shorts and features. No specific lengths. Our awards are to help screenwriters move their script up the ladder and hopefully have it made into a film. Our awards are updated all year long as sponsors step onboard. The winners go home with lots of stuff. The contest is open to any writer, all ages, we have an ‘Under 18’ category too. We are an international contest. We have at least 15–20 judges and they are all in different aspects of the entertainment industry, such as producers, directors, writers, actors, agents. No, we don’t use loglines anywhere, we keep your script private. We do accept award-winning screenplays; there are no restrictions as long as it is in the horror/thriller or sci-fi/fantasy genres. We accept shorts and features. No specific lengths. Our awards are

### FORMAT YOUR SCRIPTS

“Rules are meant to be broken” is an axiom that has long been used by entrepreneurs, politicians and fashionistas as an excuse for bending traditional guidelines to fit an alternative vision. Contrary to popular thought, however, being a non-conformist when it comes to presentation isn’t a smart course to follow if your product is a theatrical script or screenplay that you want taken seriously. Here are just a few of many industry standards for how your script should be formatted and packaged:

- Use 8.5 × 11 white paper printed on one side in black ink.
- Include page numbers as a header
- Use Courier New 12-pt. Font for screenplays and either Courier or Times New Roman for a stage play.
- Aim for 110–120 pages in length.
- Bind the pages of your script together with 2–3 brass brads. Staples—especially industrial strength ones—are not only a pain to remove but also viciously chew up the corners of your work. Nor

should you use Acco prong fasteners, spiral binding, thermal binding or a 3-ring binder.

- Include your contact information on the cover page.
- Capitalize characters as they are introduced, but make the names lowercase thereafter.
- In a play, the action begins following the words AT RISE. A film, however, always opens with the direction FADE IN. Neither one concludes with THE END but rather, FADE TO BLACK or FADE OUT.
- A screenplay is much trickier to format than a stage play, so consider screenwriting software programs such as Final Draft.

From the first page of any given script, it’s easy to identify those who have done their homework. The reality is studio readers, agents and prospective producers won’t read beyond the first page if a script deviates from industry standards. Make sure your script is in good form so it gets the read it deserves.

— Christina Hamlett

WINNING TIPS 

to help screenwriters move their script up the ladder and hopefully have it made into a film. Our winners take that win and parlay it into agents, film deals and options.”  
**DEADLINE:** March 20, May 22 and July 10.

### **SOUTHEASTERN THEATRE CONFERENCE NEW PLAY PROJECT**

Dept. of Theatre & Dance, Austin Peay State Univ., 681 Summer St., Clarksville TN 37044. **E-MAIL:** hardinb@apsu.edu. **CONTACT:** Chris Hardin, chair. **PRIZE:** \$1,000 and a staged reading. **ENTRY FEE:** None. **GUIDELINES:** Annual award for full-length plays or related one-acts. No musicals or children’s plays. Submissions must be unproduced/unpublished. Readings and workshops are acceptable. Submit application, synopsis and 1 copy of script on CD or as an e-mail attachment (preferred). Send SASE or visit website for application. Playwrights who reside in the SETC region (or who are enrolled in a regionally accredited educational institution in the SETC region) or who reside outside the region but are SETC members are eligible for consideration. SETC Region states include Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia, West Virginia. Mission: The SETC New Play Project is dedicated to the discovery, development and publicizing of worthy new plays and playwrights. “Text should be in 12-pt. type and in a plain font such as Times New Roman. Plays must be submitted by e-mail attachment in Microsoft Word or PDF format with the following guidelines: Script must include page numbers at the bottom of each page. The author’s name should not appear anywhere in the script. Do not include résumés, playwright biographies or a history of the play. Send 1 copy, attached to an e-mail; send completed application form included as separate e-mail attachment. Electronic signatures will be accepted. The decision of the panel of readers will be announced in November of each year.” Entries will be accepted from March 1–June 1. One submission per playwright only. **DEADLINE:** June 1.

### **SOUTHERN PLAYWRIGHTS COMPETITION**

Jacksonville State University, 700 Pelham Rd. N., Jacksonville AL 36265-1602. (256)782-5469. Fax: (256)782-5441. **E-MAIL:** jmaloney@jsu.edu; swhitton@

jsu.edu. **WEBSITE:** www.jsu.edu/depart/english/southpla.htm. **CONTACT:** Joy Maloney, Steven J. Whitton. **PRIZE:** \$1,000 and production of the play. **ENTRY FEE:** None. **GUIDELINES:** “Offered annually to identify and encourage the best of Southern playwriting. Playwrights must be a native or resident of Alabama, Arkansas, District of Columbia, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Missouri, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia or West Virginia.”  
**DEADLINE:** January 15.

### **TEN-MINUTE PLAY FESTIVAL**

Fire Rose Productions & International Arts Group, 11246 Magnolia Blvd., NoHo Theatre & Arts District CA 91601. (818)766-3691. **E-MAIL:** info@fireroseproductions.com. **CONTACT:** Kaz Matamura, director. **PRIZE:** First place: \$200; second place: \$100; professionally mounted production for winners and semi-finalists. **ENTRY FEE:** \$5. **GUIDELINES:** Contest is offered twice a year for unpublished and unproduced plays that are 8–12 minutes long. Fire Rose Productions & International Arts Group are nonprofit organizations that are committed to discovering new playwrights and giving them opportunities to work with directors and producers. Download the application online. Guest judges are entertainment professionals including writers, producers, directors and agents. Fire Rose Productions does the first evaluation. Acquires right to produce and mount the plays if chosen as festival finalists or semi-finalists. No royalties are gathered for those performances. **DEADLINE:** March 31.

### **THEATRE CONSPIRACY ANNUAL NEW PLAY CONTEST**

Theatre Conspiracy, 10091 McGregor Blvd., Ft. Myers FL 33919. (239)936-3239. Fax: (239)936-0510. **E-MAIL:** info@theatreconspiracy.org. **CONTACT:** Bill Taylor, artistic director. **PRIZE:** \$700 and full production. **ENTRY FEE:** \$5 fee. **GUIDELINES:** Offered annually for full-length plays that are unproduced or have received up to 3 productions with 8 or fewer characters and simple to moderate production demands. No musicals. 1 entry per year. Send SASE for contest results. **DEADLINE:** March 30.

**VERMONT PLAYWRIGHT'S AWARD**

The Valley Players, P.O. Box 441, Waitsfield VT 05673. (802)583-6767. **E-MAIL:** valleyplayer@madriver.com. **CONTACT:** Sharon Kellerman. **PRIZE:** \$1,000. **ENTRY FEE:** Contact for information. **GUIDELINES:** Offered annually for unpublished, nonmusical, full-length plays suitable for production by a community theater group to encourage development of playwrights in Vermont, New Hampshire and Maine. **DEADLINE:** February 1.

**THE HERMAN VOADEN NATIONAL PLAYWRITING COMPETITION**

Drama Department, Queen's University, Kingston ON K7L 3N6 Canada. (613)533-2104. **E-MAIL:** carolanne.hanna@queensu.ca; drama@queensu.ca. **CONTACT:** Carol Anne Hanna. **PRIZE:** \$3,000, \$2,000, and 8 honorable mentions. First- and second-prize winners are offered a 1-week workshop and public reading by professional director and cast. **ENTRY FEE:** \$40 entry fee. **GUIDELINES:** Offered every 2 years for unpublished plays to discover and develop new Canadian plays. Open to Canadian citizens or landed immigrants. **DEADLINE:** See website for deadlines and detailed guidelines.

**WATERFRONT FILM FESTIVAL AND INDIE SCREENPLAY COMPETITION**

P.O. Box 387, Saugatuck MI 49453. (269)857-8351. **E-MAIL:** screenplay@waterfrontfilm.org. **PRIZE:** Prize includes cash, an industry reception in the winner's honor, lodging and VIP pass to the festival. **ENTRY FEE:** \$40. **GUIDELINES:** The contest is now accepting entries from writers in any state. All genres. Previously, the contest was only for local writers. Scripts must be 80–130 pages in length. Entries are accepted through Withabox. **DEADLINE:** April 1.

**WORLDVEST-HOUSTON INDEPENDENT INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL**

9898 Bissonnet St., Suite 650, Houston TX 77036. (713)965-9955. Fax: (713)965-9960. **E-MAIL:** entry@worldfest.org. **WEBSITE:** www.worldfest.org. **CONTACT:** Entry coordinator. **PRIZE:** Cash prizes, production deals, workshops,

options, master classes and seminars. **ENTRY FEE:** \$45–\$85. **GUIDELINES:** See website. Competition for all genres of screenplays, films and videos. **DEADLINE:** December 15.

**YEAR END SERIES (YES) FESTIVAL OF NEW PLAYS**

Dept. of Theatre, Nunn Dr., Northern Kentucky University, Highland Heights KY 41099-1007. (859)572-6362. Fax: (859)572-6057. **E-MAIL:** forman@nku.edu. **CONTACT:** Sandra Forman, project director. **PRIZE:** \$500 and an expense-paid visit to Northern Kentucky University to see the play produced. **ENTRY FEE:** None. **GUIDELINES:** "Receives submissions from May 1–September 30 in even-numbered years for the festivals which occur in April of odd-numbered years. Open to all writers." **DEADLINE:** October 1.

**YOUNG PLAYWRIGHTS INC. NATIONAL PLAYWRITING COMPETITION**

Young Playwrights, Inc., PO Box 5134, New York NY 10185. (212)594-5440. Fax: (212)594-5441. **E-MAIL:** literary@youngplaywrights.org. **CONTACT:** Literary department. **PRIZE:** Winners receive an invitation to New York City for the annual Young Playwrights, Inc. Writers Conference and a professionally staged reading of their play. Entrants retain all rights to their work. **ENTRY FEE:** None. **GUIDELINES:** Open to U.S. residents only. The Young Playwrights Festival National Playwriting Competition is offered annually to identify talented American playwrights aged 18 or younger. Please include your address, phone number, e-mail address and date of birth on the title page. **DEADLINE:** January 2 (postmarked).

**YOUNG PLAYWRIGHTS INC. WRITE A PLAY! NYC COMPETITION**

Young Playwrights, Inc., P.O. Box 5134, New York NY 10185. (212)594-5440. Fax: (212)684-4902. **E-MAIL:** literary@youngplaywrights.org. **CONTACT:** Literary department. **PRIZE:** varies. **ENTRY FEE:** None. **GUIDELINES:** "Offered annually for stage plays of any length (no musicals, screenplays or adaptations) by NYC elementary, middle and high school students only." **DEADLINE:** March 1. 🍷

JENNIFER BENNER is the assistant editor of *Writing Contests*.

## NONFICTION CONTESTS & AWARDS

*Here are 59 competitions for writers of nonfiction,  
books, memoir, articles and more.*

**T**he realm of nonfiction writing covers a lot of ground. If you write nonfiction, that could mean books, narrative writing, articles, essays, memoir, life stories or any combination thereof. But no matter what nonfiction category (or categories) you write, winning or placing high in a contest can gain you valuable public attention for your work. Grants offered by large writing organizations can also offer monetary recognition to writers—giving them more financial freedom as they work on projects.

On the following pages, you will find complete listings for 59 contests and awards for writers of adult and children's nonfiction. These contests offer you the opportunity for your work to be judged on the basis of quality alone without the outside factors (like budgets, trends and the marketplace) that sometimes influence publishing decisions. Some focus on form, such as articles, books or a collection of newspaper columns, while others feature writing on particular themes or topics. Chances are, no matter what type of nonfiction you write, there is a contest or award program that may be a good match for you.

Remember that one size never truly fits all, so pay attention to each listing's specific tastes, target audiences and submission requirements. Good luck!

### ABBREVIATIONS

**ISBN:** Industry standard book number **MS.:** Manuscript **MSS.:** Manuscripts **SAS:** Self addressed stamped (as in postcard) **SASE:** Self addressed stamped envelope **TBA:** To be announced



### AMWA MEDICAL BOOK AWARDS COMPETITION

American Medical Writers Association, 30 West Gude Dr., Suite 525, Rockville MD 20850-1161. (301)294-5303. **FAX:** (301)294-9006. **E-MAIL:** slynn@amwa.org. **WEBSITE:** www.amwa.org. **CONTACT:** Awards liaison. **PRIZE:** First place receives a rose wood and acrylic award. Honorable mentions receive certificates. **ENTRY FEE:** \$50. **GUIDELINES:** Offered annually to honor the best medical book published in the previous year in each of 3 categories: books for physicians, books for health care (non-physicians) professionals, and books for public health care consumers. **DEADLINE:** March 1.

### JOHN BULLEN PRIZE

Canadian Historical Association, 395 Wellington St., Ottawa ON K1A 0N4 Canada. (613)233-7885. **FAX:** (613)567-3110. **E-MAIL:** cha-shc@lac-bac.gc.ca. **PRIZE:** \$500. **ENTRY FEE:** None. **GUIDELINES:** Offered annually for an outstanding historical dissertation for a doctoral degree at a Canadian university. Open only to Canadian citizens or landed immigrants. **DEADLINE:** November 30.

### CANADIAN AUTHORS ASSOCIATION LELA COMMON AWARD FOR CANADIAN HISTORY

74 Mississaga St. E., Orillia ON L3V 1A5 Canada. (705)719-3926. **FAX:** 1(866)393-1401. **E-MAIL:** admin@canauthors.org. **CONTACT:** Anita Purcell. **PRIZE:** \$2,500 and a silver medal. **ENTRY FEE:** \$35 (Canadian). **GUIDELINES:** Offered annually for a work of historical nonfiction on a Canadian topic by a Canadian author. Entry form required. Obtain entry form from contact name or download from website. The CAA Awards Chair appoints a trustee for this award. That trustee selects 2 judges. The identities of the trustee and judges are confidential throughout the judging process. Decisions of the trustee and judges are final, and they may choose not to award a prize. A shortlist of the best 3 entries in each category will be announced. **TIPS:** Other awards managed by the CAA can be found on the website. **DEADLINE:** December 15.

### CANADIAN LIBRARY ASSOCIATION STUDENT ARTICLE CONTEST

Canadian Library Association, 328 Frank St., Ottawa ON K2P 0X8 Canada. (613)232-9625, ext. 301. **FAX:** (613)563-9895. **CONTACT:** Valerie Delrue. **PRIZE:** First place: \$150 and trip to CLA's annual conference; first runner-up: \$150 and \$75 in CLA publications; second runner-up: \$100 and \$75 in CLA publications. **ENTRY FEE:** None. **GUIDELINES:** Offered annually to unpublished articles discussing, analyzing or evaluating timely issues in librarianship or information science. Open to all students registered in or recently graduated from a Canadian library school, a library techniques program or faculty of education library program. Submissions may be in English or French. **DEADLINE:** March 31.

### THE DOROTHY CHURCHILL CAPPON CREATIVE NONFICTION AWARD

*New Letters*, University of Missouri-Kansas City, 5101 Rockhill Rd., Kansas City MO 64110. (816)235-1168. **FAX:** (816)235-2611. **E-MAIL:** newletters@umkc.edu. **CONTACT:** Ashley Kaine. **PRIZE:** First place: \$1,500 and publication in a volume of *New Letters*; runner-up will receive a copy of a recent book of poetry or fiction courtesy of BkMk Press. **ENTRY FEE:** \$15 (includes cost of a 1-year subscription). **GUIDELINES:** Contest is offered annually for unpublished work to discover and reward emerging writers and to give experienced writers a place to try new genres. Acquires first North American serial rights. Open to any writer. Guidelines for SASE or online. **DEADLINE:** Third week of May. All entries will receive consideration for publication in future editions of *New Letters*.

### MORTON N. COHEN AWARD

Modern Language Association of America, 26 Broadway, 3rd Floor, New York NY 10004-1789. (646)576-5141. **FAX:** (646)458-0030. **E-MAIL:** awards@mmla.org. **CONTACT:** Coordinator of book prizes. **PRIZE:** A cash award and a certificate to be presented at the Modern Language Association's annual convention in January. **ENTRY FEE:** None. **GUIDELINES:** Awarded in odd-numbered years for a distinguished edition of letters. At least

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1 volume of the edition must have been published during the previous 2 years. Editors need not be members of the MLA. **DEADLINE:** May 1.

### **THE SHAUGHNESSY COHEN PRIZE FOR POLITICAL WRITING**

The Writers' Trust of Canada, 90 Richmond St. E., Suite 200, Toronto ON M5C 1P1 Canada. (416)504-8222. **FAX:** (416)504-9090. **E-MAIL:** [info@writerstrust.com](mailto:info@writerstrust.com). **CONTACT:** Amanda Hopkins, program coordinator. **PRIZE:** \$25,000 and \$2,500 to 4 finalists. **ENTRY FEE:** Contact for information. **GUIDELINES:** "Awarded annually for a nonfiction book of outstanding literary merit that enlarges our understanding of contemporary Canadian political and social issues. Presented at the Politics & The Pen event each spring in Ottawa. Open to Canadian citizens and permanent residents only." **DEADLINE:** November 5.

### **CARR P. COLLINS AWARD FOR NONFICTION**

The Texas Institute of Letters, 6335 W. Northwest Hwy., #618, Dallas TX 75225. (214)363-7253. **E-MAIL:** [dpayne@smu.edu](mailto:dpayne@smu.edu). **WEBSITE:** [texasinstituteofletters.org/](http://texasinstituteofletters.org/). **CONTACT:** Darwin Payne. **PRIZE:** \$5,000. **ENTRY FEE:** None. **GUIDELINES:** Offered annually for work published January 1–December 31 of the previous year to recognize the best nonfiction book by a writer who was born in Texas, who has lived in the state for at least 2 consecutive years at 1 point or a writer whose work has some notable connection with Texas. See website for guidelines. **DEADLINE:** January 3.

### **COMPETITION FOR WRITERS OF BC HISTORY**

British Columbia Historical Federation, P.O. Box 5254, Station B, Victoria BC V8R 6N4 Canada. **E-MAIL:** [info@bchistory.ca](mailto:info@bchistory.ca). **WEBSITE:** [www.bchistory.ca](http://www.bchistory.ca). **PRIZE:** Cash, a certificate and an invitation to the BCHF annual conference. Winner receives the Lieutenant-Governor's Medal for Historical Writing. **ENTRY FEE:** None. **GUIDELINES:** "Offered annually to nonfiction books containing a facet of nonfiction books about BC history and published during contest year. Books become the property of BC Historical Federation." **DEADLINE:** December 31.

### **CREATIVE NONFICTION PRIZE**

National League of American Pen Women, Nob Hill, San Francisco Branch, The Webhallow House, 1544 Sweetwood Dr., Broadmoor Village CA 94015-1717. **E-MAIL:** [pennobhill@aol.com](mailto:pennobhill@aol.com). **CONTACT:** Eileen Malone. **PRIZE:** First place: \$100; second place: \$50; third place: \$25. **ENTRY FEE:** \$5/entry (make checks payable to NLAPW, Nob Hill Branch). **GUIDELINES:** All prose works must be typed, page numbered and double-spaced. Each entry up to 3,000 words. Identify only with 3x5 card. Open annually to any writer. **DEADLINE:** November 30.

### **ANNIE DILLARD AWARD IN CREATIVE NONFICTION**

*Bellingham Review*, Mail Stop 9053, 516 High St., Western Washington University, Bellingham WA 98225. (360)650-4863. **E-MAIL:** [bhreview@cc.wvu.edu](mailto:bhreview@cc.wvu.edu). **CONTACT:** Brenda Miller. **PRIZE:** First place: \$1,000, plus publication and copies. **ENTRY FEE:** \$18/first entry, \$10/additional entry. All finalists considered for publication. **GUIDELINES:** Offered annually for unpublished essays on any subject and in any style. Guidelines for SASE or online. All entrants receive subscription. The *Bellingham Review* seeks literature of palpable quality: poems, stories and essays so beguiling they invite us to come closer, look deeper, touch, sniff and taste their essence. We hunger for a kind of writing that nudges the limits of form or executes traditional forms exquisitely. **DEADLINE:** December 1–March 15.

### **GORDON W. DILLON/RICHARD C. PETERSON MEMORIAL ESSAY PRIZE**

American Orchid Society, Inc., 16700 AOS Ln., Delray Beach FL 33446-4351. (561)404-2040. **FAX:** (561)404-2045. **E-MAIL:** [jmengel@aos.org](mailto:jmengel@aos.org); [lstewart@aos.org](mailto:lstewart@aos.org). **WEBSITE:** [www.aos.org](http://www.aos.org). **CONTACT:** Lindsay Stewart. **PRIZE:** Cash award and a certificate. Winning entry usually published in the May issue of *Orchids* magazine. **ENTRY FEE:** Contact for information. **GUIDELINES:** "Annual contest open to all writers. The theme is announced each May in *Orchids* magazine. All themes deal with an aspect of orchids, such as repotting, grow-

ing, hybridizing, etc. Unpublished submissions only. Themes in past years have included Orchid Culture, Orchids in Nature and Orchids in Use. Acquires 1-time rights.” **DEADLINE:** November 30.

### THE DONNER PRIZE

The Award for Best Book on Canadian Public Policy, The Donner Canadian Foundation, 349 Carlaw Ave., Toronto ON M4M 2T1 Canada. (416)368-8253 or (416)368-3763. **E-MAIL:** sherry@mdgassociates.com. **WEBSITE:** www.donnerbookprize.com. **CONTACT:** Sherry Naylor. **PRIZE:** \$30,000; five shortlist authors get \$5,000 each. **ENTRY FEE:** None. **GUIDELINES:** “Offered annually for nonfiction published January 1–December 31 that highlights the importance of public policy and to reward excellent work in this field. Entries must be published in either English or French. Open to Canadian citizens.” **DEADLINE:** November 30.

### EDUCATOR’S AWARD

The Delta Kappa Gamma Society International, P.O. Box 1589, Austin TX 78767-1589. (888)762-4685. **FAX:**

(512)478-3961. **WEBSITE:** www.deltakappagamma.net. **CONTACT:** Educator’s award committee. **PRIZE:** \$2,500. **ENTRY FEE:** Contact for information. **GUIDELINES:** “Offered annually for quality research and nonfiction published January–December of previous year. This award recognizes educational research and writings of female authors whose work may influence the direction of thought and action necessary to meet the needs of today’s complex society. The book must be written by 1 or 2 women who are citizens of any country in which The Delta Kappa Gamma Society International is organized: Canada, Costa Rica, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Great Britain, Guatemala, Iceland, Mexico, The Netherlands, Norway, Puerto Rico, Sweden, U.S. Guidelines (required) for SASE. **DEADLINE:** February 1.

### EVERETT E. EDWARDS MEMORIAL AWARD

*Agricultural History*, P.O. Box 5075, Minard Hall 203, NDSU, Fargo ND 58105-5075. (701)231-5831. **FAX:** (701)231-5832. **E-MAIL:** ndsu.agricultural.history@ndsu.nodak.edu. **CONTACT:** Claire Strom. **GUIDELINES:** Offered annually for best graduate paper written dur-

## USE EMOTIONAL BEATS IN YOUR MEMOIR

A memoir is an emotional journey. The events in the story are there not because they happened, but to show the shifts in emotion the narrator (you) goes through, event by event, over the course of the book. These shifts are called “beats.”

A beat is an event keyed to an emotion.

Here’s an event: “And then my mother told me she’d had an affair.” But how does that event affect the story? Here’s the beat: “It was the first time that she made herself vulnerable to me, and for the first time in months, I really looked at her.”

Take a look at these beats (with the emotional keys italicized, and of course simplified) in my student Erika Johnson’s memoir-in-progress, *Wicked Stepmother*:

**(BEAT)** Erika is *excited* to be marrying the man she loves. He has a 5-year-old, Max, *but that’s no problem*: After all, the boy is with his mother half the time.

**(BEAT)** On her wedding night, she waits downstairs

in a negligee for her husband to finish putting Max to bed, only to find the two of them fast asleep. *She realizes there is an intruder in her marriage.* **(BEAT)** She scolds herself for *resenting and disliking* the son. **(BEAT)** *She vows to be a good sport.* That very morning, as a first step, she transforms Max’s bedroom into a page out of Pottery Barn Kids. **(BEAT)** *Being a good sport doesn’t work.* **(BEAT)** *She avoids the boy* by first staying away from the house as much as possible, and then by taking a job in India. **(BEAT)** *She is lonely.* **(BEAT)** *She decides the answer is to quit her job and throw herself wholeheartedly into the role of stepmother.* **(BEAT)** *She is frustrated* when the boy’s mother excludes her from school events. ... (And so on.)

Can you see how these beats link together to form the arc? These are the events—linked with emotion—that must be dramatized in scene in your memoir.

—Adair Lara



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ing the calendar year on any aspect of agricultural and rural studies (broadly interpreted). Open to submission by any graduate student. **PRIZE:** \$200 as well as publication of the paper in the scholarly journal, *Agricultural History*. **ENTRY FEE:** None. **DEADLINE:** December 31.

### **EVANS BIOGRAPHY & HANDCART AWARDS**

Mountain West Center for Regional Studies, Utah State University, 0700 Old Main Hill, Logan UT 84322-0700. (435)797-3630. **FAX:** (435)797-3899. **E-MAIL:** mwc@cc.usu.edu. **PRIZE:** \$10,000 and \$1,000. **ENTRY FEE:** None. **GUIDELINES:** Offered to encourage the writing of biography about people who have played a role in Mormon country (not the religion, the region—intermountain west with parts of southwestern Canada and northwestern Mexico). Publishers or authors may nominate books. Criteria for consideration: Work must be a biography or autobiography on someone who lived in our significantly contributed to the history of the interior west; must be submitted for consideration for publication year's award; new editions or reprints are not eligible; mss are not accepted. Submit 5 copies. **DEADLINE:** January 1.

### **EVENT NONFICTION CONTEST**

*Event*, The Douglas College Review, P.O. Box 2503, New Westminster BC V3L 5B2 Canada. (604)527-5293. **FAX:** (604)527-5095. **E-MAIL:** event@douglas.bc.ca. **PRIZE:** 3 winners will each receive \$500, plus payment for publication. **ENTRY FEE:** \$29.95, which includes 1-year subscription; American and overseas residents pay in U.S. funds. **GUIDELINES:** Offered annually for unpublished creative nonfiction. Maximum length: 5,000 words. Acquires first North American serial print rights and limited non-exclusive digital rights for the 3 winning entries. Open to any writer, except Douglas College employees. **DEADLINE:** April 15.

### **DINA FEITELSON RESEARCH AWARD**

International Reading Association, Division of Research & Policy, 800 Barksdale Rd., Newark DE 19714-8139. (302)731-1600, ext. 423. **FAX:** (302)731-1057. **E-MAIL:** research@reading.org. **CONTACT:** Marcella Moore. **PRIZE:** Monetary award and recognition at the

International Reading Association's annual convention. **ENTRY FEE:** Contact for information. **GUIDELINES:** "This is an award for an exemplary work published in English in a refereed journal that reports on an empirical study investigating aspects of literacy acquisition, such as phonemic awareness, the alphabetic principle, bilingualism or cross-cultural studies of beginning reading. Articles may be submitted for consideration by researchers, authors, et al. Copies of the applications and guidelines can be downloaded in PDF format from the website." **DEADLINE:** September 1.

### **WALLACE K. FERGUSON PRIZE**

Canadian Historical Association, 395 Wellington St., Ottawa ON K1A 0N4 Canada. (613)233-7885. **FAX:** (613)567-3110. **E-MAIL:** cha-shc@lac-bac.gc.ca. **CONTACT:** Michel Duquet, executive coordinator. **PRIZE:** \$1,000. **ENTRY FEE:** None. **GUIDELINES:** Offered to a Canadian who has published the outstanding scholarly book in a field of history other than Canadian history. Open to Canadian citizens and landed immigrants. **DEADLINE:** Dec. 2.

### **GEORGE FREEDLEY MEMORIAL AWARD**

Theatre Library Assoc., Benjamin Rosenthal Library, Queens College, CUNY, 65-30 Kissena Blvd., Flushing NY 11367. (718)997-3672. **FAX:** (718)997-3753. **E-MAIL:** svallillo@comcast.net. **CONTACT:** Stephen M. Vallillo, book awards committee chair. **PRIZE:** \$500 and a certificate to the winner; \$200 and certificate for honorable mention. **ENTRY FEE:** None. **GUIDELINES:** Offered for a book published in the U.S. within the previous calendar year on a subject related to live theatrical performance (including cabaret, circus, pantomime, puppetry, vaudeville, etc.). Eligible books may include biography, history, theory, criticism, reference or related fields. **DEADLINE:** March 15 of year following eligibility.

### **LIONEL GELBER PRIZE**

Munk Center for International Studies, University of Toronto, 1 Devonshire Place, Toronto ON M5S 3K7 Canada. (416)946-8901. **FAX:** (416)946-8915. **E-MAIL:** gelberprize.munk@utoronto.ca. **CONTACT:** Prize manager. **PRIZE:** \$15,000 (Canadian funds). **ENTRY FEE:**



None. **GUIDELINES:** Offered annually for the year's most outstanding work of nonfiction in the field of international relations. Books must be published in English or English translation January 1–December 31 of the current year and submitted by the publisher. Publishers should submit 6 copies of each title (up to 3 titles can be submitted). **DEADLINE:** October 31.

### GOVERNOR GENERAL'S LITERARY AWARD FOR LITERARY NON-FICTION

Canada Council for the Arts, 350 Albert St., P.O. Box 1047, Ottawa ON K1P 5V8 Canada. (613)566-4414, ext. 5573. **FAX:** (613)566-4410. **WEBSITE:** [www.canadacouncil.ca/prizes/ggla](http://www.canadacouncil.ca/prizes/ggla). **CONTACT:** Lori Knoll. **PRIZE:** Each laureate receives \$25,000; non-winning finalists receive \$1,000. **ENTRY FEE:** Contact for information. **GUIDELINES:** Offered annually for the best English-language and the best French-language work of literary nonfiction by a Canadian. **DEADLINE:** Depends on the book's publication date: Books in English: March 15, June 1 or August 7. Books in French: March 15 or July 15.

### JOHN GUYON LITERARY NONFICTION PRIZE

*Crab Orchard Review*, English Department, Southern Illinois Univ. Carbondale, Carbondale IL 62901-4503. **E-MAIL:** [jtribble@siu.edu](mailto:jtribble@siu.edu). **CONTACT:** Jon C. Tribble, managing editor. **PRIZE:** \$1,500 and publication. **ENTRY FEE:** \$10/essay (limit of 3 essays of up to 6,500 words each), which includes 1 copy of *Crab Orchard Review* featuring the winners. **GUIDELINES:** "Offered annually for unpublished work. This competition seeks to reward excellence in the field of creative nonfiction. This is not a prize for academic essays. *Crab Orchard Review* acquires first North American serial rights to submitted works. Open to U.S. citizens only." **DEADLINE:** March 1–April 30.

### THE KIRIYAMA PRIZE

Pacific Rim Voices, 300 Third St., Suite 822, San Francisco CA 94107. (415)777-1628. **FAX:** (415)777-1646. **E-MAIL:** [admin@kiryamapize.org](mailto:admin@kiryamapize.org). **CONTACT:** Jeannine Stronach, prize manager. **PRIZE:** \$30,000, to be divided equally between the author of 1 fiction and 1 nonfiction book. **ENTRY FEE:** Contact for information. **GUIDELINES:**

Offered for work published from January 1–December 31 of the current prize year to promote books that will contribute to greater mutual understanding and increased cooperation throughout the Pacific Rim and South Asia. Guidelines and entry form on request, or may be downloaded from the website. Books must be submitted for entry by the publisher. Proper entry forms must be submitted. **DEADLINE:** late fall each year.

### KATHERINE SINGER KOVACS PRIZE

Modern Language Association of America, 26 Broadway, 3rd Floor, New York NY 10004-1789. (646)576-5141. **FAX:** (646)458-0030. **E-MAIL:** [awards@mmla.org](mailto:awards@mmla.org). **CONTACT:** Coordinator of book prizes. **PRIZE:** A cash award and a certificate to be presented at the Modern Language Association's annual convention in January. **ENTRY FEE:** None. **GUIDELINES:** Offered annually for a book published during the previous year in English or Spanish in the field of Latin American and Spanish literatures and cultures. Books should be broadly interpretive works that enhance understanding of the interrelations among literature, the other arts and society. Author must be a current member of the MLA. **DEADLINE:** May 1.

### LINCOLN PRIZE AT GETTYSBURG COLLEGE

Gettysburg College and Lincoln & Soldiers Institute, 300 N. Washington St., Campus Box 435, Gettysburg PA 17325. (717)337-6590. **FAX:** (717)337-6596. **E-MAIL:** [lincolnprize@gettysburg.edu](mailto:lincolnprize@gettysburg.edu). **PRIZE:** \$50,000. **ENTRY FEE:** None. **GUIDELINES:** Offered annually for the "finest scholarly work in English on the era of the American Civil War. The award will usually go to a book published in the previous year; however articles, essays and works of fiction may be submitted." Guidelines for SASE or online. **DEADLINE:** November 1.

### TONY LOTHIAN PRIZE

119a Fordwych Rd., London NW2 3NJ United Kingdom. (44)(20)8452 4993. **E-MAIL:** [anna@annaswan.co.uk](mailto:anna@annaswan.co.uk). **CONTACT:** Anna Swan. **PRIZE:** £2,000. **ENTRY FEE:** £10. **GUIDELINES:** Further details at [www.biographersclub.co.uk](http://www.biographersclub.co.uk). "Entries should consist of a 10-page synopsis and 10 pages of a sample chapter for a proposed biography. Open to any biographer who has not previously been

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published or commissioned or written a book.” Judges have included Michael Holroyd, Victoria Glendinning, Selina Hastings, Frances Spalding, Lyndall Gordon, Anne de Courcy, Nigel Hamilton, Anthony Sampson and Mary Lovell. **DEADLINE:** August 1.

### **WALTER D. LOVE PRIZE**

North American Conference on British Studies, History Department, 0119 Sutherland Bldg., Penn State University, Abington PA 19001. **E-MAIL:** dmhirst@wustl.edu. **CONTACT:** Derek Hirst. **PRIZE:** \$150. **ENTRY FEE:** None. **GUIDELINES:** Offered annually for best article in any field of British studies. Open to American or Canadian writers. **DEADLINE:** April 1.

### **JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL PRIZE**

Modern Language Association of America, 26 Broadway, 3rd Floor, New York NY 10004-1789. (646)576-5141. **FAX:** (646)458-0030. **E-MAIL:** awards@mla.org. **CONTACT:** Coordinator of book prizes. **PRIZE:** Cash award and a certificate to be presented at the Modern Language Association’s annual convention in January. **ENTRY FEE:** None. **GUIDELINES:** Offered annually for literary or linguistic study, or critical edition or biography published in previous year. Open to MLA members only. **DEADLINE:** March 1.

### **SIR JOHN A. MACDONALD PRIZE**

Canadian Historical Association, 395 Wellington St., Ottawa ON K1A 0N4 Canada. (613)233-7885. **FAX:** (613)567-3110. **E-MAIL:** cha-shc@lac-bac-gc.ca. **CONTACT:** Michel Duquet, executive coordinator. **PRIZE:** \$1,000. **ENTRY FEE:** None. **GUIDELINES:** Open to Canadian citizens only. Offered annually to award a previously published nonfiction work of Canadian history judged to have made the most significant contribution to an understanding of the Canadian past. **DEADLINE:** December 2.

### **RICHARD J. MARGOLIS AWARD**

c/o Margolis & Bloom, LLP, 535 Boylston St., 8th floor, Boston MA 02116. (617)267-9700, ext. 517. **E-MAIL:** harry@margolis.com. **CONTACT:** Harry S. Margolis. **PRIZE:** \$5,000 and a 1-month residency at the Blue Mountain Center—a writers’ and artists’ colony in

the Adirondacks in Blue Mountain Lake, New York. **ENTRY FEE:** None. **GUIDELINES:** Sponsored by the Blue Mountain Center, this annual award is given to a promising new journalist or essayist whose work combines warmth, humor, wisdom and concern with social justice. Submit 3 copies of 2 examples of your published or unpublished work (maximum 30 pages) and a short biographical note. **DEADLINE:** July 1.

### **HOWARD R. MARRARO PRIZE**

Modern Language Association of America, 26 Broadway, 3rd Floor, New York NY 10004-1789. (646)576-5141. **FAX:** (646)458-0030. **E-MAIL:** awards@mla.org. **CONTACT:** Coordinator of book prizes. **PRIZE:** Cash award and a certificate to be presented at the Modern Language Association’s annual convention in January. **ENTRY FEE:** None. **GUIDELINES:** Offered in even-numbered years for a scholarly book or essay on any phase of Italian literature or comparative literature involving Italian, published in previous year. Authors must be members of the MLA. **DEADLINE:** May 1.

### **KENNETH W. MILDENBERGER PRIZE**

Modern Language Association of America, 26 Broadway, 3rd Floor, New York NY 10004-1789. (646)576-5141. **FAX:** (646)458-0030. **E-MAIL:** awards@mla.org. **CONTACT:** Coordinator of book prizes. **PRIZE:** Cash award and a certificate, to be presented at the Modern Language Association’s annual convention in January and a year’s membership in the MLA. **ENTRY FEE:** None. **GUIDELINES:** Offered annually for a publication from the previous year in the field of language culture, literacy or literature with a strong application to the teaching of languages other than English. Author need not be a member. **DEADLINE:** May 1.

### **MLA PRIZE FOR A DISTINGUISHED BIBLIOGRAPHY**

Modern Language Association of America, 26 Broadway, 3rd Floor, New York NY 10004-1789. (646)576-5141. **FAX:** (646)458-0030. **E-MAIL:** awards@mla.org. **CONTACT:** Coordinator of book prizes. **PRIZE:** Cash prize and a certificate to be presented at the Modern Language Association’s annual convention in January. **ENTRY FEE:** None. **GUIDELINES:** Offered in even-num-

bered years for enumerative and descriptive bibliographies published in monographic, book or electronic format in the 2 years prior to the competition. Open to any writer or publisher. **DEADLINE:** May 1.

### **MLA PRIZE FOR A DISTINGUISHED SCHOLARLY EDITION**

Modern Language Association of America, 26 Broadway, 3rd Floor, New York NY 10004-1789. (646)576-5141. **FAX:** (646)458-0030. **E-MAIL:** awards@mla.org. **CONTACT:** Coordinator of book prizes. **PRIZE:** Cash award and a certificate to be presented at the Modern Language Association's annual convention in January. **ENTRY FEE:** None. **GUIDELINES:** Offered in odd-numbered years. To qualify for the award, an edition should be based on an examination of all available relevant textual sources; the source texts and the edited text's deviations from them should be fully described; the edition should employ editorial principles appropriate to the materials edited and those principles should be clearly articulated in the volume; the text should be accompanied by appropriate textual and other historical contextual information; the edition should exhibit the highest standards of accuracy in the presentation of its text and apparatus; and the text and apparatus should be presented as accessibly and elegantly as possible. Editor need not be a member of the MLA. **DEADLINE:** May 1.

### **MLA PRIZE FOR A FIRST BOOK**

Modern Language Association of America, 26 Broadway, 3rd Floor, New York NY 10004-1789. (646)576-5141. **FAX:** (646)458-0030. **E-MAIL:** awards@mla.org. **CONTACT:** Coordinator of book prizes. **PRIZE:** Cash award and a certificate to be presented at the Modern Language Association's annual convention in January. **ENTRY FEE:** None. **GUIDELINES:** Offered annually for the first book-length scholarly publication by a current member of the association. To qualify, a book must be a literary or linguistic study, a critical edition of an important work or a critical biography. Studies dealing with literary theory, media, cultural history and interdisciplinary topics are eligible; books

that are primarily translations will not be considered. **DEADLINE:** April 1.

### **MLA PRIZE FOR INDEPENDENT SCHOLARS**

Modern Language Association of America, 26 Broadway, 3rd Floor, New York NY 10004-1789. (646)576-5141. **FAX:** (646)458-0030. **E-MAIL:** awards@mla.org. **CONTACT:** Coordinator of book prizes. **PRIZE:** Cash award, a certificate and a year's membership in the MLA. **ENTRY FEE:** None. **GUIDELINES:** Offered annually for a book in the field of English or another modern language, or literature published in the previous year. Authors who are enrolled in a program leading to an academic degree or who hold tenured or tenure-track positions in higher education are not eligible. Authors need not be members of MLA. Guidelines and application for SASE. **DEADLINE:** May 1.

### **LINDA JOY MYERS MEMOIR PRIZE**

National League of American Pen Women, Nob Hill, San Francisco Branch, Webhallow House, 1544 Sweetwood Dr., Broadmoor Village CA 94015-1717. **E-MAIL:** pennobhill@aol.com. **CONTACT:** Eileen Malone. **PRIZE:** First place: \$100; second place \$50; third place: \$25. **ENTRY FEE:** \$5/entry (make checks payable to NLAPW, Nob Hill Branch). **GUIDELINES:** "1 memoir/entry, up to 3,000 words, double-spaced. Previously published material is acceptable. Indicate category on first page. Identify only with 3x5 card. Open annually to any writer." **DEADLINE:** November 30.

### **GEORGE JEAN NATHAN AWARD FOR DRAMATIC CRITICISM**

Cornell University, Department of English, Goldwin Smith Hall, Ithaca NY 14853. (607)255-6801. **FAX:** (607)255-6661. **CONTACT:** Chair, Department of English. **PRIZE:** The annual award now amounts to \$10,000. In addition, the winner receives a trophy symbolic of, and attesting to, the award. **ENTRY FEE:** Contact for information. **GUIDELINES:** See guidelines and entry form online at website. Offered annually to the American who has written the best piece of drama criticism during the theatrical year (July 1–June 30), whether it is an article, essay, treatise or book. Only published work

may be submitted; author must be an American citizen.  
**DEADLINE:** Contact for information.

### **NATIONAL WRITERS ASSOCIATION NONFICTION CONTEST**

The National Writers Association, 10940 S. Parker Rd., #508, Parker CO 80134. (303)841-0246. **FAX:** (303)841-2607. **E-MAIL:** natlwritersassn@hotmail.com. **CONTACT:** Sandy Whelchel, director. **PRIZE:** First place: \$200; second place: \$100; third place: \$50. **ENTRY FEE:** \$18 fee. **GUIDELINES:** “Annual contest to encourage writers in this creative form and to recognize those who excel in nonfiction writing.” **DEADLINE:** December 31.

### **THE FREDERIC W. NESS BOOK AWARD**

Association of American Colleges and Universities, 1818 R St. NW, Washington DC 20009. (202)387-3760. **FAX:** (202)265-9532. **E-MAIL:** info@aacu.org. **CONTACT:** Bethany Sutton. **PRIZE:** \$2,000 and a presentation at the association’s annual meeting—transportation and 1 night hotel for meeting are also provided. **ENTRY FEE:** None. **GUIDELINES:** Offered annually for work published in the previous year. Each year the Frederic W. Ness Book Award Committee of the Association of American Colleges and Universities recognizes books

which contribute to the understanding and improvement of liberal education. Guidelines for SASE or online. “Writers may nominate their own work; however, we send letters of invitation to publishers to nominate qualified books.” **DEADLINE:** May 1.

### **OUTSTANDING DISSERTATION OF THE YEAR AWARD**

International Reading Association, 800 Barksdale Rd., P.O. Box 8139, Newark DE 19714-8139. (302)731-1600, ext. 423; (800)336-7323. **FAX:** (302)731-1057. **E-MAIL:** research@reading.org. **CONTACT:** Marcella Moore. **PRIZE:** \$1,000. **ENTRY FEE:** Contact for information. **GUIDELINES:** “Copies of the applications and guidelines can be downloaded in PDF format from the website. This award is offered annually to recognize dissertations in the field of reading and literacy. Applicants must be members of the International Reading Association. **DEADLINE:** October 1.

### **FRANK LAWRENCE AND HARRIET CHAPPELL OWSLEY AWARD**

Southern Historical Association, Dept. of History, University of Georgia, Athens GA 30602-1602. (706)542-8848. **FAX:** (706)542-2455. **CONTACT:**

### **HONOR THY READER**

Trust your reader. Your reader wants the writer to respect his intelligence, to make him feel included, not to show off your erudition at his expense. Don’t talk down to your reader, but don’t make him feel stupid, either, by slinging around jargon or technical knowledge that the average educated person is unlikely to know. When in doubt, explain technical matters as precisely and readably as you can. Use a glossary, a map, an appendix, if you have to—anything in service of clarity.

Your reader wants to be clear on the literal action of the story—who is actually doing what to whom, where, when, and in what real-world context. Your reader hates to be confused, insulted, deliberately offended for no good reason.

Your reader craves a sense that the story is leading somewhere interesting and important. Your reader wants

to be challenged, put on his mettle, encouraged to use his wits. Most of all, your reader does not want to be bored.

Your reader wants to learn things he never knew before, to feel a sense of satisfaction and accomplishment and enlightenment for having read your book.

Writing well may just be a matter of life and death—your reader may be desperate for the truth of your book. Great books—like all great art—are great precisely because they change lives. They have an indelible effect on the imagination, the conscience, the intellect of those who experience them.

This is thrilling—and terrifying.

—Excerpted from *Writing Creative Nonfiction* by Philip Gerard





Southern Historical Association. **PRIZE:** \$1,000 and a certificate. **ENTRY FEE:** None. **GUIDELINES:** Offered in odd-numbered years for recognition of a distinguished book in Southern history published in even-numbered years. Publishers usually submit the books. **DEADLINE:** March 1.

### PRESERVATION FOUNDATION CONTESTS

The Preservation Foundation, Inc., 2213 Pennington Bend, Nashville TN 37214. **E-MAIL:** [preserve@storyhouse.org](mailto:preserve@storyhouse.org). **WEBSITE:** [www.storyhouse.org](http://www.storyhouse.org). **CONTACT:** Richard Loller. **PRIZE:** First place: \$100 in each category; certificates for finalists. **ENTRY FEE:** First entry in each category is free; \$10/additional entry (limit 3 entries/category). **GUIDELINES:** “Open to any previously unpublished writer. Defined as having made no more than \$750 by creative writing in any previous year. Contest offered annually for unpublished nonfiction. General nonfiction category (1,500–5,000 words)—any appropriate nonfiction topic. Travel nonfiction category (1,500–5,000 words)—must be a true story of a trip by the author or someone known personally by the author. E-mail entries only (no mss).” **DEADLINE:** August 31.

### JAMES A. RAWLEY PRIZE

Organization of American Historians, P.O. Box 5457, 112 N. Bryan Ave., Bloomington IN 47408-5457. (812)855-7311. **FAX:** (812)855-0696. **CONTACT:** Award and prize committee coordinator. **PRIZE:** \$1,000. **ENTRY FEE:** None. **GUIDELINES:** “Offered annually for a book dealing with the history of race relations in the United States. Books must have been published in the current calendar year. Guidelines available online.” **DEADLINE:** October 1; books to be published after October 1 of the calendar year may be submitted as page proofs.

### PHILLIP D. REED MEMORIAL AWARD FOR OUTSTANDING WRITING ON THE SOUTHERN ENVIRONMENT

Southern Environmental Law Center, 201 W. Main St., Suite 14, Charlottesville VA 22902-5065. (434)977-4090. **FAX:** (434)977-1483. **E-MAIL:** [cmccue@selcva.org](mailto:cmccue@selcva.org). **WEBSITE:** [www.SouthernEnvironment.org/phil\\_reed](http://www.SouthernEnvironment.org/phil_reed).

**CONTACT:** Cathryn McCue, writing award coordinator. **PRIZE:** \$1,000 for winner in each category. See [www.southernenvironment.org/about/reed\\_award/](http://www.southernenvironment.org/about/reed_award/). **ENTRY FEE:** None. **GUIDELINES:** Offered annually for nonfiction pieces that most effectively tell stories about the South’s environment. Categories include journalism and books. Entries must have been published during the previous calendar year and have a minimum of 3,000 words. Guidelines online or for SASE. **DEADLINE:** early January.

### EVELYN RICHARDSON NONFICTION AWARD

Writers’ Federation of Nova Scotia, 1113 Marginal Rd., Halifax NS B3H 4P7 Canada. (902)423-8116. **FAX:** (902)422-0881. **E-MAIL:** [talk@writers.ns.ca](mailto:talk@writers.ns.ca). **CONTACT:** Nate Crawford, executive director. **PRIZE:** \$2,000. **ENTRY FEE:** None. **GUIDELINES:** “This annual award is named for Nova Scotia writer Evelyn Richardson, whose book *We Keep a Light* won the Governor General’s Literary Award for nonfiction in 1945. There is no entry fee or form. Full-length books of nonfiction written by Nova Scotians, and published as a whole for the first time in the previous calendar year, are eligible. Publishers: Send 4 copies and a letter attesting to the author’s status as a Nova Scotian and the author’s current mailing address and telephone number.” **DEADLINE:** First Friday in December.

### SASKATCHEWAN NONFICTION AWARD

Saskatchewan Book Awards, Inc., 205B-2314 11th Ave., Regina SK S4P 0K1 Canada. (306)569-1585. **FAX:** (306)569-4187. **E-MAIL:** [director@bookawards.sk.ca](mailto:director@bookawards.sk.ca). **CONTACT:** Jackie Lay, executive director. **PRIZE:** \$2,000 CAD. **ENTRY FEE:** \$25 CAD. **GUIDELINES:** Offered annually for work published September 15–September 14. This award is presented to a Saskatchewan author for the best book of nonfiction, judged on the quality of writing. **DEADLINE:** first: July 31; final: September 14.

### SASKATCHEWAN SCHOLARLY WRITING AWARD

Saskatchewan Book Awards, Inc., 205B-2314 11th Ave., Regina SK S4P 0K1 Canada. (306)569-1585. **FAX:** (306)569-4187. **E-MAIL:** [director@bookawards](mailto:director@bookawards).

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sk.ca. **CONTACT:** Jackie Lay, executive director. **PRIZE:** \$2,000. **ENTRY FEE:** \$25 (Canadian). **GUIDELINES:** Offered annually for work published September 15–September 14 annually. This award is presented to a Saskatchewan author for the best contribution to scholarship. The work must recognize or draw on specific theoretical work within a community of scholars and participate in the creation and transmission of knowledge. **DEADLINE:** first: July 31; final: September 14.

### **ALDO AND JEANNE SCAGLIONE PRIZE FOR COMPARATIVE LITERARY STUDIES**

Modern Language Association of America, 26 Broadway, 3rd Floor, New York NY 10004-1789. (646)576-5141. **FAX:** (646)458-0030. **E-MAIL:** awards@mla.org. **CONTACT:** Coordinator of book prizes. **PRIZE:** Cash award and a certificate to be presented at the Modern Language Association's annual convention in January. **ENTRY FEE:** None. **GUIDELINES:** Offered annually for outstanding scholarly work published in the preceding year in the field of comparative literary studies involving at least 2 literatures. Author must be a member of the MLA. Works of scholarship, literary history, literary criticism and literary theory are eligible; books that are primarily translations are not eligible. **DEADLINE:** May 1.

### **ALDO AND JEANNE SCAGLIONE PRIZE FOR FRENCH AND FRANCOPHONE STUDIES**

Modern Language Association of America, 26 Broadway, 3rd Floor, New York NY 10004-1789. (646)576-5141. **FAX:** (646)458-0030. **E-MAIL:** awards@mla.org. **CONTACT:** Coordinator of book prizes. **PRIZE:** Cash award and a certificate to be presented at the Modern Language Association's annual convention in January. **ENTRY FEE:** None. **GUIDELINES:** Offered annually for work published in the preceding year that is an outstanding scholarly work in the field of French or francophone linguistic or literary studies. Author must be a member of the MLA. Works of scholarship, literary history, literary criticism and literary theory are eligible; books that are primarily translations are not eligible. **DEADLINE:** May 1.

### **ALDO AND JEANNE SCAGLIONE PRIZE FOR ITALIAN STUDIES**

Modern Language Association of America, 26 Broadway, 3rd Floor, New York NY 10004-1789. (646)576-5141. **FAX:** (646)458-0030. **E-MAIL:** awards@mla.org. **CONTACT:** Coordinator of book prizes. **PRIZE:** Cash award and a certificate to be presented at the Modern Language Association's annual convention in January. **ENTRY FEE:** Contact for information. **GUIDELINES:** Offered in odd-numbered years for a scholarly book on any phase of Italian literature or culture, or comparative literature involving Italian, including works on literary or cultural theory, science, history, art, music, society, politics, cinema and linguistics, preferably but not necessarily relating other disciplines to literature. Books must have been published in year prior to competition. Authors must be members of the MLA. **DEADLINE:** May 1.

### **ALDO AND JEANNE SCAGLIONE PRIZE FOR STUDIES IN GERMANIC LANGUAGES & LITERATURE**

Modern Language Association of America, 26 Broadway, 3rd Floor, New York NY 10004-1789. (646)576-5141. **FAX:** (646)458-0030. **E-MAIL:** awards@mla.org. **CONTACT:** Coordinator of book prizes. **PRIZE:** Cash award and a certificate to be presented at the Modern Language Association's annual convention in January. **ENTRY FEE:** None. **GUIDELINES:** Offered in even-numbered years for outstanding scholarly work appearing in print in the previous 2 years and written by a member of the MLA on the linguistics or literatures of the Germanic languages. Works of literary history, literary criticism and literary theory are eligible; books that are primarily translations are not eligible. **DEADLINE:** May 1.

### **ALDO AND JEANNE SCAGLIONE PRIZE FOR STUDIES IN SLAVIC LANGUAGES AND LITERATURES**

Modern Language Association of America, 26 Broadway, 3rd Floor, New York NY 10004-1789. (646)576-5141. **FAX:** (646)458-0030. **E-MAIL:** awards@mla.org. **CONTACT:** Coordinator of book prizes. **PRIZE:** Cash award and a certificate to be presented at the Modern Language Association's annual convention in January.

**ENTRY FEE:** None. **GUIDELINES:** Offered in odd-numbered years for books published in the previous 2 years. Membership in the MLA is not required. Works of literary history, literary criticism, philology and literary theory are eligible; books that are primarily translations are not eligible. **DEADLINE:** May 1.

### **ALDO AND JEANNE SCAGLIONE PUBLICATION AWARD FOR A MANUSCRIPT IN ITALIAN LITERARY STUDIES**

Modern Language Association, 26 Broadway, 3rd Floor, New York NY 10004-1789. (646)576-5141. **FAX:** (646)458-0030. **E-MAIL:** awards@mmla.org. **CONTACT:** Coordinator of book prizes. **PRIZE:** A cash award and a certificate. **ENTRY FEE:** None. **GUIDELINES:** Awarded annually to an author of a ms dealing with any aspect of the languages and literatures of Italy, including medieval Latin and comparative studies, or intellectual history if main thrust is clearly related to the humanities. Materials from ancient Rome are eligible if related to postclassical developments. Also translations of classical works of prose and poetry produced in Italy prior to 1900 in any language (i.e., neo-Latin, Greek) or in a dialect of Italian (i.e., Neapolitan, Roman, Sicilian). Work can be in English or Italian. Authors must be members of the MLA and currently reside in the U.S. or Canada. **DEADLINE:** August 1.

### **MINA P. SHAUGHNESSY PRIZE**

Modern Language Association of America, 26 Broadway, 3rd Floor, New York NY 10004-1789. (646)576-5141. **FAX:** (646)458-0030. **E-MAIL:** awards@mmla.org. **CONTACT:** Coordinator of book prizes. **PRIZE:** Cash prize, a certificate to be presented at the Modern Language Association's annual convention in January and a 1-year membership in the MLA. **ENTRY FEE:** None. **GUIDELINES:** Offered annually for a scholarly book in the fields of language, culture, literacy or literature with strong application to the teaching of English published during preceding year. Authors need not be members of the MLA. **DEADLINE:** May 1.

### **FRANCIS B. SIMKINS AWARD**

Southern Historical Association, Dept. of History, University of Georgia, Athens GA 30602-1602. (706)542-8848. **FAX:** (706)542-2455. **CONTACT:** John B. Boles, editor. **PRIZE:** \$1,000 and a certificate. **ENTRY FEE:** None. **GUIDELINES:** "The award is sponsored jointly with Longwood College. Offered in odd-numbered years for recognition of the best first book by an author in the field of Southern history over a 2-year period." **DEADLINE:** March 1.

### **CHARLES S. SYDNOR AWARD**

Southern Historical Association, Dept. of History, University of Georgia, Athens GA 30602. (706)542-8848. **FAX:** (706)542-2455. **CONTACT:** Southern Historical Association. **PRIZE:** \$1,000 and a certificate. **ENTRY FEE:** None. **GUIDELINES:** Offered in even-numbered years for recognition of a distinguished book in Southern history published in odd-numbered years. Publishers usually submit books. **DEADLINE:** March 1.

### **WESTERN WRITERS OF AMERICA**

MSC06 3770, 1 University of New Mexico, Albuquerque NM 87131-0001. (505)277-5234. **FAX:** (505)277-5275. **E-MAIL:** wwa@unm.edu. **CONTACT:** Paul Hutton, exec. director. **PRIZE:** Contact for information. **ENTRY FEE:** None. **GUIDELINES:** "17 Spur Award categories in various aspects of the American West." Send entry form with your published work. "The nonprofit Western Writers of America has promoted and honored the best in Western literature with the annual Spur Awards, selected by panels of judges. Awards, for material published last year, are given for works whose inspirations, image and literary excellence best represent the reality and spirit of the American West." Today, Spurs are offered for the best Western novel (short novel), best novel of the West (long novel), best original paperback novel, best short story, best short nonfiction. Also, best contemporary nonfiction, best biography, best history, best juvenile fiction and nonfiction, and best first novel. "Accepts multiple submissions, each with its own entry form." 🏆

JENNIFER BENNER is the assistant editor of *Writing Contests*.



# WRITER'S DIGEST

## WRITING COMPETITIONS

**W**riter's Digest is proud to sponsor five writing competitions each year. Since the first WD contest back in 1933, our winners have been going on to realize incredible writing success, including:

- Nancy Tupper Ling, whose non-rhyming poem won our Annual Writing Competition in 2005. Ling met with agents in New York as part of her prize and saw her first children's book published a few years later.
- Dom Testa, who won our International Self-Published Book Awards in 2005 and then sold his winning young adult book, *Galahad 1: The Comet's Curse*, and five others to Tor Teen Books.
- Tim Slover, whose play, "March Tale," won its category in our Annual Writing Competition in 1996. He then sold the movie rights for \$200,000.
- Judith Guest, who won an honorable mention in our Annual Writing Competition in 1972, and went on to write the novel *Ordinary People*, which was adapted into an Oscar-winning film. Guest later told WD that the honorable mention bolstered her confidence along her writing journey.

It's true—with entry numbers ranging from the thousands to the tens of thousands, winning a WD contest is not easy. It's tough competition, for sure—but the prizes are worth it. Those who do garner our top prize have an amazing thing to include on their résumé and query letter.

Turn the page to learn more about how to enter this year.



*Call for entries*

6TH ANNUAL

WD

WRITER'S DIGEST

# Poetry

AWARDS

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A trip to the Writer's Digest Conference in New York City, \$500 cash, publication in *Writer's Digest*, and a copy of the *2011 Poet's Market*

Enter the only *Writer's Digest* competition exclusively for poets. Whatever your style—rhyming, free verse, haiku or something else—as long as your poems are 32 lines or fewer, we want them all!

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FOR MORE INFORMATION OR TO ENTER ONLINE, VISIT  
[WritersDigest.com/poetryawards](http://WritersDigest.com/poetryawards)

CALL FOR ENTRIES

6TH ANNUAL



# POPULAR FICTION AWARDS

A Short-Story Competition by WRITER'S DIGEST

**CALLING ALL FANS OF ROMANCE, MYSTERY AND MORE:**

Enter the competition that celebrates short stories  
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## GRAND PRIZE:

A trip to the Writer's Digest Conference in New York City,  
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HORROR

Just make sure your stories are 4,000 words or fewer,  
and send in your entries by November 1, 2010.

For more information or to enter online, visit  
[WritersDigest.com/popularfictionawards](http://WritersDigest.com/popularfictionawards)

# SHOW US YOUR SHORTS.



## 11th Annual WRITER'S DIGEST SHORT SHORT STORY COMPETITION

WE'RE LOOKING FOR FICTION THAT'S BOLD AND BRILLIANT... BUT BRIEF.

Send us your best in 1,500 words or fewer.  
But don't be too long about it — deadline is Dec. 1, 2010.

### PRIZES:

FIRST PLACE: **\$3,000** AND A TRIP TO THE WRITER'S DIGEST CONFERENCE

SECOND PLACE: **\$1,500** • THIRD PLACE: **\$500**

FOURTH THROUGH 10TH PLACE: **\$100**

11th through 25th Place: \$50 Gift Certificate for **WRITER'S DIGEST BOOKS**

The names and story titles of the First- through 10th-place winners will be printed in the May/June 2011 *Writer's Digest*, and winners will receive the 2011 *Novel & Short Story Writer's Market* and 2011 *Guide to Literary Agents*. Plus, all First- through 25th-place winners will receive a free copy of the 11th Annual *Writer's Digest Short Short Story Competition Collection*.

ENTER ONLINE AT [WritersDigest.com/short](http://WritersDigest.com/short)

### 11th Annual WRITER'S DIGEST SHORT SHORT STORY COMPETITION

The first- through 25th-place manuscripts will be printed in a special competition collection. Use the entry form to order your copy at the pre-publication special price! (Publication date: May 2011. You are not required to purchase the collection to enter the contest.)

#### THE RULES

1. The competition is open to manuscripts of 1,500 words or fewer. Entries outside the word limitation will be disregarded. Type the word count on the first page of your entry, along with your name, street address, daytime phone number and e-mail address.
2. The entry fee is \$20 per manuscript. You may enter as many manuscripts as you wish. You may send one check (in U.S. funds) and one entry form for all entries.
3. All entries must be in English, original, unpublished and not submitted elsewhere at the time of submission. *Writer's Digest* retains one-time publication rights to the 1st through 25th-place winning entries to be published in a *Writer's Digest* publication. No refunds will be issued for disqualified entries.
4. All entries must be typewritten and double-spaced on one side of 8½ x 11 or A4 white paper. Manuscripts will not be returned. Entries must be stapled.
5. Entries must be postmarked by Dec. 1, 2010.
6. Winners will be notified by Feb. 14, 2011. If you have not been contacted by this date, you may assume that your entry is not a finalist and may be marketed elsewhere.
7. Enclose a self-addressed, stamped postcard with your entry if you want to be notified of its receipt. We cannot notify you personally of your story's status before the winners are announced.
8. Winners' names will appear in the May/June 2011 issue of *Writer's Digest* magazine. Their names and story titles will be posted at [writersdigest.com](http://writersdigest.com) after that time.
9. The following are not permitted to enter the competition: employees of F+W Media, Inc. and their immediate families, and *Writer's Digest* contributing editors and correspondents as listed on the masthead.

#### PRIVACY PROMISE

Occasionally we make portions of our customer list available to other companies so they may contact you about products and services that may be of interest to you. If you prefer we withhold your name, simply send a note with your name, address and the competition name to: List Manager, F+W Media, 4700 East Galbraith Road, Cincinnati, OH 45236.

### 11th Annual WRITER'S DIGEST SHORT SHORT STORY COMPETITION

ENTRY FORM • Deadline: Dec. 1, 2010

I am entering \_\_\_\_ Manuscript(s) at \$20 per entry.  
I am ordering \_\_\_\_ Competition Collection(s) at \$11.95 each  
(includes \$1.95 S&H)

(You are not required to purchase the collection to enter the contest.)

Total \_\_\_\_\_

#### Method of Payment

Check or money order enclosed (U.S. funds only)  
 Charge my  VISA  MC Exp. \_\_\_\_

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E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Please send me information via e-mail about future  
*Writer's Digest* competitions.

Please make check or money order payable to *Writer's Digest*  
in U.S. funds, drawn on a U.S. bank.

#### Mail manuscript(s) and entry fee(s) to:

The *Writer's Digest* Short Short Story Competition  
4700 East Galbraith Road • Cincinnati, Ohio 45236



# WRITER'S DIGEST

## ANNUAL WRITING COMPETITION

**MORE THAN \$30,000 IN CASH AND PRIZES!**

### COMPETE AND WIN IN 10 CATEGORIES:

Inspirational Writing (Spiritual/Religious) • Memoir/Personal Essay • Magazine Feature Article • Genre Short Story (Mystery, Romance, Etc.) • Television/Movie Script • Mainstream/Literary Short Story • Rhyming Poetry • Non-Rhyming Poetry • Stage Play • Children's/Young Adult Fiction

### THE COMPETITION OPENS TO ENTRIES SOON!

Visit [WritersDigest.com/competitions](http://WritersDigest.com/competitions) for complete rules, guidelines and to enter.



# WRITER'S DIGEST

## INTERNATIONAL SELF-PUBLISHED BOOK AWARDS

**MORE THAN \$17,000 IN CASH AND PRIZES!**

Each year, *Writer's Digest* honors self-published authors with the Annual Self-Published Book Awards. And this year is no exception! Here's your chance to enter our only competition exclusively for self-published books.

### THE COMPETITION OPENS TO ENTRIES SOON!

Visit [WritersDigest.com/competitions](http://WritersDigest.com/competitions) for complete rules, guidelines and to enter.



## GLOSSARY OF TERMS

*If you're going to walk the walk, you'll need to talk the talk. Here's your guide to industry terms that savvy writers should know.*

**#10 ENVELOPE.** A standard, business-size envelope.

**ACQUISITIONS EDITOR.** The person responsible for originating and/or acquiring new publishing projects.

**ADAPTATION.** The process of rewriting a composition (novel, story, film, article, play) into a form suitable for some other medium, such as TV or the stage.

**ADVANCE.** Money a publisher pays a writer prior to book publication, usually paid in installments, such as one-half upon signing the contract and one-half upon delivery of the complete, satisfactory manuscript. An advance is paid against the royalty money to be earned by the book. Agents take their percentage off the top of the advance as well as from the royalties earned.

**ADVENTURE.** A genre of fiction in which action is the key element, overshadowing characters, theme and setting.

**AUTHOR'S COPIES.** An author usually receives about 10 free copies of his hardcover book from the publisher; more from a paperback firm. He can obtain additional copies at a price that has been reduced by an author's discount (usually 50 percent of the retail price).

**AUTOBIOGRAPHY.** A book-length account of a person's entire life written by the subject himself.

**BACKLIST.** A publisher's list of books that were not published during the current season, but are still in print.

**BACKSTORY.** The history of what has happened before the action in your story takes place, affecting a character's current behavior.

**BIO.** A sentence or brief paragraph about the writer; includes work and educational experience.

**BIOGRAPHY.** An account of a person's life (or the lives of a family or close-knit group) written by someone other than the subject(s). The work is set within the historical framework (i.e., the unique economic, social and political conditions) existing during the subject's life.

**BLURB.** The copy on paperback book covers or hardcover book dust jackets, either promoting the book and the author or featuring testimonials from book reviewers or well-known people in the book's field. Also called flap copy or jacket copy.

**BOILERPLATE.** A standardized publishing contract. Most authors and agents make many changes on the boilerplate before accepting the contract.

**BOUND GALLEYS.** A prepublication, often paperbound, edition of a book, usually prepared from photocopies of the final galley proofs. Designed for promotional purposes, bound galleys serve as the first set of review copies to be mailed out. Also called bound proofs.

**CATEGORY FICTION.** A term used to include all types of fiction. See *genre*.

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**CLIMAX.** The most intense point in the story line of a fictional work.

**CLIPS.** Samples, usually from newspapers or magazines, of your published work. Also called tearsheets.

**COMMERCIAL FICTION.** Novels designed to appeal to a broad audience. These are often broken down into categories such as western, mystery and romance. See *genre*.

**CONFLICT.** A prime ingredient of fiction that usually represents some obstacle to the main character's (i.e., the protagonist's) goals.

**CONTRIBUTOR'S COPIES.** Copies of the book sent to the author. The number of contributor's copies is often negotiated in the publishing contract.

**COPYEDITING.** Editing of a manuscript for writing style, grammar, punctuation and factual accuracy.

**COPYRIGHT.** A means to protect an author's work. A copyright is a proprietary right designed to give the creator of a work the power to control that work's reproduction, distribution and public display or performance, as well as its adaptation to other forms.

**COVER LETTER.** A brief letter that accompanies the manuscript being sent to an agent or publisher.

**CREATIVE NONFICTION.** Type of writing where true stories are told by employing the techniques usually reserved for novelists and poets, such as scenes, character arc, a three-act structure and detailed descriptions. This category is also called narrative nonfiction or literary journalism.

**CURRICULUM VITAE (CV).** Short account of one's career or qualifications.

**DEADLINE.** A specified date and/or time that a project or draft must be turned into the editor. A deadline factors into a preproduction schedule, which involves copyediting, typesetting, and production.

**DEUS EX MACHINA.** A term meaning "God from the machine" that refers to any unlikely, contrived or trick resolution of a plot in any type of fiction.

**DIALOGUE.** An essential element of fiction and, to some degree, memoir. Dialogue consists of conversations between two or more people, and can be used heavily or sparsely.

**DIVISION.** An unincorporated branch of a publishing house/company.

**ELECTRONIC RIGHTS.** Secondary or subsidiary rights dealing with electronic/multimedia formats (the Internet, CD-ROMs, electronic magazines).

**EROTICA.** A form of literature or film dealing with the sexual aspects of love. Erotic content ranges from subtle sexual innuendo to explicit descriptions of sexual acts.

**ETHNIC.** Stories and novels whose central characters are African American, Native American, Italian American, Jewish, Appalachian or members of some other specific cultural group. Ethnic fiction usually deals with a protagonist caught between two conflicting ways of life: mainstream American culture and his ethnic heritage.

**EXCLUSIVE.** Offering a manuscript, usually for a set period of time such as one month, to just one agent and guaranteeing that agent is the only one looking at the manuscript.

**EXPERIMENTAL.** Type of fiction that focuses on style, structure, narrative technique, setting and strong characterization rather than plot. This form depends largely on the revelation of a character's inner being, which elicits an emotional response from the reader.

**FAMILY SAGA.** A story that chronicles the lives of a family or a number of related or interconnected families over a period of time.

**FANTASY.** Stories set in fanciful, invented worlds or in a legendary, mythic past that rely on outright invention or magic for conflict and setting.

**FILM RIGHTS.** May be sold or optioned by the agent/author to a person in the film industry, enabling the book to be made into a movie.

**GENRE.** Refers to either a general classification of writing, such as a novel, poem or short story, or to the categories within those classifications, such as problem

novels or sonnets. Genre fiction is a term that covers various types of commercial novels, such as mystery, romance, Western, science fiction and horror.

**GHOSTWRITING.** A writer puts into literary form the words, ideas or knowledge of another person under that person's name. Some agents offer this service; others pair ghostwriters with celebrities or experts.

**GOTHIC.** Novels characterized by historical settings and featuring young, beautiful women who win the favor of handsome, brooding heroes while simultaneously dealing with some life-threatening menace—either natural or supernatural.

**GRAPHIC NOVEL.** Contains comic-like drawings and captions, but deals more with everyday events and issues than with superheroes.

**HIGH CONCEPT.** A story idea easily expressed in a quick, one-line description.

**HI-LO.** A type of fiction that offers a high level of interest for readers at a low reading level.

**HISTORICAL.** A story set in a recognizable period of history. In addition to telling the stories of ordinary people's lives, historical fiction may involve political or social events of the time.

**HOOK.** Aspect of the work that sets it apart from others and draws in the reader/viewer.

**HORROR.** A story that aims to evoke some combination of fear, fascination and revulsion in its readers—either through supernatural or psychological circumstances.

**HOW-TO.** A book that offers the reader a description of how something can be accomplished. It includes both information and advice.

**IMPRINT.** The name applied to a publisher's specific line of books.

**IN MEDIAS RES.** A Latin term, meaning “into the midst of things,” that refers to the literary device of beginning a narrative at a dramatic point in a story well along in the sequence of events to immediately convey action and capture reader interest.

**IRC.** International Reply Coupon. Buy at a post office to enclose with material sent outside the country to cover the cost of return postage. The recipient turns them in for stamps in their own country.

**ISBN.** This acronym stands for International Standard Book Number. ISBN is a tool used for both ordering and cataloging purposes.

**JOINT CONTRACT.** A legal agreement between a publisher and two or more authors that establishes provisions for the division of royalties their co-written book generates.

**JUVENILE.** Category of children's writing that can be broken down into easy-to-read books (ages 7–9), which run 2,000–10,000 words, and middle-grade books (ages 9–12), which run 20,000–40,000 words.

**LIBEL.** A form of defamation, or injury to a person's name or reputation. Written or published defamation is called *libel*, whereas spoken defamation is known as *slander*.

**LITERARY.** A book where style and technique are often as important as subject matter. In literary fiction, character is typically more important than plot, and the writer's voice and skill with words are both very essential. Also called serious fiction.

**LOGLINE.** A one-sentence description of a plot.

**MAINSTREAM FICTION.** Fiction on subjects or trends that transcend popular novel categories like mystery or romance. Using conventional methods, this kind of fiction tells stories about people and their conflicts.

**MASS MARKET PAPERBACKS.** Softcover books, usually 4×7 inches, on a popular subject directed at a general audience and sold in groceries, drugstores and bookstores.

**MEMOIR.** An author's commentary on the personalities and events that have significantly influenced one phase of his life.

**MIDLIST.** Those titles on a publisher's list expected to have limited sales. Midlist books are mainstream, not

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literary, scholarly or genre, and are usually written by new or relatively unknown writers.

**MYSTERY.** A form of narration in which one or more elements remain unknown or unexplained until the end of the story. Subgenres include: amateur sleuth, caper, cozy, heist, malice domestic, police procedural, etc.

**NET RECEIPTS.** One method of royalty payment based on the amount of money a book publisher receives on the sale of the book after the booksellers' discounts, special sales discounts and returned copies.

**NOVELLA.** A short novel or long short story, usually 20,000–50,000 words. Also called a novelette.

**ONE-TIME RIGHTS.** This right allows a short story or portions of a fiction or nonfiction book to be published again without violating the contract.

**OPTION.** The act of a producer buying film rights to a book for a limited period of time (usually six months or one year) rather than purchasing said rights in full. A book can be optioned multiple times by different production companies.

**OPTION CLAUSE.** A contract clause giving a publisher the right to publish an author's next book.

**OUTLINE.** A summary of a book's content (up to 15 double-spaced pages); often in the form of chapter headings with a descriptive sentence or two under each one to show the scope of the book.

**PICTURE BOOK.** A type of book aimed at ages 2-6 that tells the story partially or entirely with artwork, with up to 1,000 words. Agents interested in selling these books often handle both artists and writers.

**PLATFORM.** A writer's speaking experience, interview skills, website, general visibility and other abilities that help form a following of potential buyers for his book.

**PROOFREADING.** Close reading and correction of a manuscript's typographical errors.

**PROPOSAL.** An offer to an editor or publisher to write a specific work, usually a package consisting of an outline and sample chapters.

**PSYCHIC/SUPERNATURAL.** Fiction exploiting—or requiring as plot devices or themes—some contradictions of the commonplace natural world and materialist assumptions about it (including the traditional ghost story).

**QUERY.** A letter written to an agent or a potential market to elicit interest in a writer's work.

**READER.** A person employed by an agent or buyer to go through the slush pile of manuscripts and scripts and select those worth considering.

**REGIONAL.** A book faithful to a particular geographic region and its people, including behavior, customs, speech and history.

**RELEASE.** A statement that your idea is original, has never been sold to anyone else, and that you are selling negotiated rights to the idea upon payment. Some agents may ask that you sign a release before they request pages and review your work.

**REMAINDERS.** Leftover copies of an out-of-print or slow-selling book purchased from the publisher at a reduced rate. Depending on the contract, a reduced royalty or no royalty is paid to the author on remaindered books.

**REPRINT RIGHTS.** The right to republish a book after its initial printing.

**ROMANCE.** A type of category fiction in which the love relationship between a man and a woman pervades the plot. The story is told from the viewpoint of the heroine, who meets a man (the hero), falls in love with him, encounters a conflict that hinders their relationship, and then resolves the conflict with a happy ending.

**ROYALTIES.** A percentage of the retail price paid to the author for each copy of the book that is sold. Agents take their percentage from the royalties earned and from the advance.

**SASE.** Self-addressed, stamped envelope. It should be included with all mailed correspondence.



**SCHOLARLY BOOKS.** Books written for an academic or research audience. These are usually heavily researched, technical, and often contain terms used only within a specific field.

**SCIENCE FICTION.** Literature involving elements of science and technology as a basis for conflict, or as the setting for a story.

**SIMULTANEOUS SUBMISSION.** Sending the same query or manuscript to several contests or publishers at the same time.

**SLICE OF LIFE.** A type of short story, novel, play or film that takes a strong thematic approach, depending less on plot than on vivid detail in describing the setting and/or environment, and the environment's effect on characters involved in it.

**SLUSH PILE.** A stack of unsolicited submissions in the office of an editor, agent or publisher.

**SUBSIDIARY.** An incorporated branch of a company or conglomerate (e.g., Crown Publishing Group is a subsidiary of Random House, Inc.).

**SUBSIDIARY RIGHTS.** All rights other than book publishing rights included in a book publishing contract, such as paperback rights, book club rights and movie rights. Part of an agent's or entertainment lawyer's job is to negotiate those rights and advise you on which to sell and which to keep.

**SUSPENSE.** The element of both fiction and some nonfiction that makes the reader uncertain about the outcome. Suspense can be created through almost any element of a story, including the title, characters, plot, time restrictions and word choice.

**SYNOPSIS.** A brief summary of a story, novel or play. As a part of a book proposal, it is a comprehensive summary condensed in a page or page and a half, single-spaced. Unlike a query letter or logline, a synopsis is a front-to-back explanation of the work—and will give away the story's ending. See *outline*.

**TERMS.** Financial provisions agreed upon in a contract, whether between writer and agent, or writer and editor.

**TEXTBOOK.** Book used in school classrooms at the elementary, high school or college level.

**THEME.** The point a writer wishes to make. It poses a question—a human problem.

**THRILLER.** A story intended to arouse feelings of excitement or suspense. Works in this genre are highly sensational, usually focusing on illegal activities, international espionage, sex and violence.

**TOC.** Table of Contents. A listing at the beginning of a book indicating chapter titles and their corresponding page numbers. It can also include chapter descriptions.

**TRADE BOOK.** Either a hardcover or softcover book sold mainly in bookstores. The subject matter frequently concerns a special interest for a more general audience.

**TRADE PAPERBACK.** A soft-bound volume, usually 5×8 inches, published and designed for the general public; available mainly in bookstores.

**TRANSLATION RIGHTS.** Sold to a foreign agent or foreign publisher.

**UNSOLICITED MANUSCRIPT.** An unrequested full manuscript sent to an editor, agent or publisher.

**VET.** A term used by editors when referring to the procedure of submitting a book manuscript to an outside expert (such as a lawyer) for review before publication. Memoirs are frequently vetted to confirm factual accuracy before the book is published.

**WESTERNS/FRONTIER.** Stories set in the American West, almost always in the 19th century, generally between the antebellum period and the turn of the century.

**YOUNG ADULT (YA).** The general classification of books written for ages 12–15. They run 40,000–80,000 words and include category novels—adventure, sports, paranormal, science fiction, fantasy, multicultural, mysteries, romance, etc. 🍷

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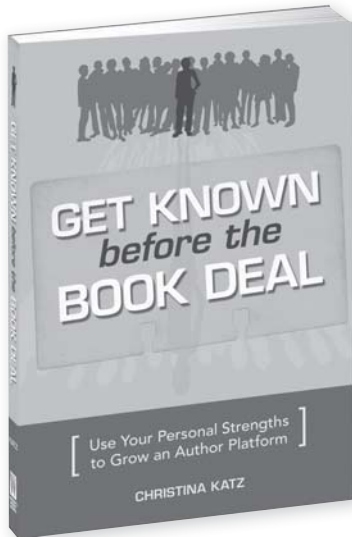
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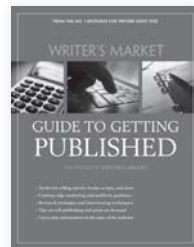


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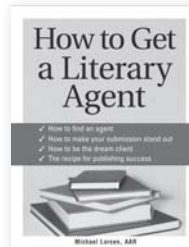
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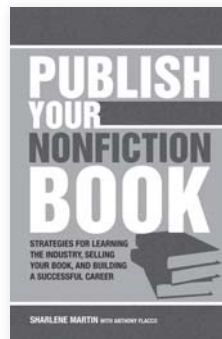
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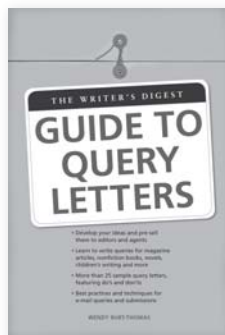


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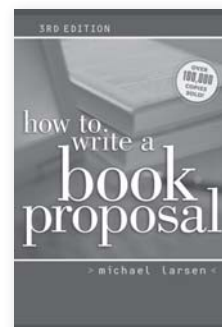
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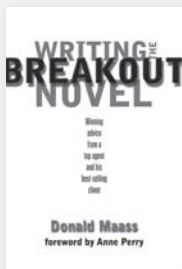
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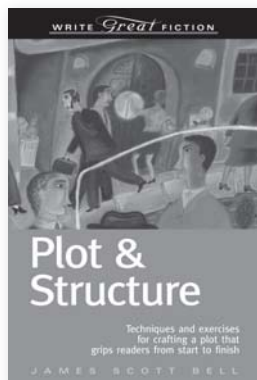
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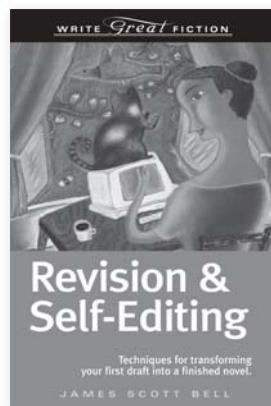
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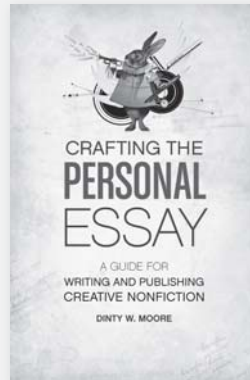
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There is something about the expectation of writing that freezes me up. I had terrible writer's block this summer (I know, I know, there is really no such thing. Truck drivers don't get driving block.) and I solved it by lowering my standards. I solved it, or worked through it, by allowing myself to write badly. I'm sure most of you are familiar with Anne Lamott's book on writing, *Bird by Bird*. I'm thinking of it now, how she encourages writers to write "shitty first drafts." She says:

*"I know some great writers, writers you love who write beautifully and have made a great deal of money, and not one of them sits down routinely feeling wildly enthusiastic and confident. Not one of them writes elegant first drafts. All right, one of them does, but we do not like her very much ... Very few writers know what they're doing until they've done it."*

This summer I wrote in a notebook. I wrote longhand. And for some reason, this helped me immensely. There was less pressure; the act seemed more casual, freer. I would scribble whatever thoughts I had onto the page, never censoring myself. For two weeks, I took to that notebook, writing for an hour or two first thing in the morning. Surprisingly, some of what I thought was "shitty" wasn't that bad when I read it over the following morning. There were some sentences, some images, some whole paragraphs worth saving. And at the end of those two weeks, I had a story.

Yesterday, I had forgotten all this. Or I had forgotten how it really felt to sit, pen in hand, and feel the freedom to write badly. It really does unlock you, giving yourself that permission. But instead of allowing myself that freedom yesterday, I procrastinated, even coming once or twice to the computer to stare at the blank screen. We put so much pressure on ourselves to be brilliant right out of the gate, to get it down right the first time. At my thesis meeting last week one of the professors said: "Write every day. Just one sentence. Just get it down. And by the end of the year you will have a book." It seems impossible, but I look back at those two weeks from this summer and see how I did just that: I got it down. This is my declaration today: Just write. However bad it may be. However shitty the first draft. 🍷

**KATE MONAHAN** is a writer and a former blogger for WD's MFA Confidential blog.

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