

WISCONSIN ROMANCE WRITERS of AMERICA (WisRWA) 26th ANNUAL FABULOUS FIVE WRITING CONTEST

Here's what prior contestants have to say:

The WisRWA Fab 5 Contest was an amazingly positive experience for me. The judges provided very helpful feedback that helped me in revisions to my YA novel, and gave me a boost of confidence in my writing career. I've gone on to land an awesome agent, see one MG novel published and the novel behind my Fab 5 entry will be published in 2015. I'll always be proud of my Fab 5 award on my office wall!"

A.M. Bostwick, finalist 2013 Young Adult category

I entered the Fab Five several times before being published and absolutely loved the feedback I received. I never won, but the experience helped hone the manuscript that eventually went on to final in the Golden Heart and was later picked up by Harlequin Historical. The Fab Five judges comments helped "thicken my skin" so that I could handle criticism--and they always gave their advice couched in compliments.

Kathryn Albright, author of *Familiar Stranger in Clear Springs*

I've entered the Fab 5 contest on several occasions and found the feedback extremely helpful. It was a good way to get my work in front of an agent or editor.

~ Kate Bowman, finalist 2015 Women's Fiction category

I always got great constructive criticism. The WisRWA first round judges were always generous and sincere in their comments and I greatly appreciated the feedback.

Barbara Raffin, author of *Saving Andi*

Here are the basics for 2017:

- We judge the first 2,500 words of your manuscript
- No synopsis required
- All entries are submitted electronically
- Five finalists per category
- You'll get great feedback from our judges

*****Polish those first few pages of your novel and send them in!*****

Five Fabulous Finalists in each of our categories!

CATEGORIES

Contemporary - Romantic novels with a projected count between 40,000 and 90,000 words including short series romances. The love story is the main focus. Example markets: Silhouette Desire; Harlequin Romance, Blaze and American, Sourcebooks; Avon; Pocket; HQN; Kensington; Grand Central Publishing.

Historical - Romantic novels with a projected count of 80,000 to 100,000 words and a historical setting. Example target markets: Bantam Dell; NAL; Avon; Berkley-Jove; Grand Central; Harlequin Historicals; Gallery Books.

Inspirational – Romantic novels with either historical or contemporary settings and containing strong faith elements and family values. Stories are told through a Christian worldview and will emphasize the hero's and heroine's journeys to a deeper relationship with each other and with God. Sex scenes and off-color language are not allowed in this category. Targeted word count varies from 55,000 to 85,000. Example target markets: Avon Inspire; Harlequin Love Inspired; Howard Books, Revell, Bethany House.

Paranormal/Fantasy/Futuristic/Time Travel - Romantic novels with any time or other world setting that includes elements such as time travel, angels, witches, vampires, aliens, or other paranormal, sci-fi or fantasy themes. Novels can vary in length depending on subgenre but in all cases should exceed 40,000 words. Example markets: Silhouette Nocturne/Luna; Tor/Forge; Pocket Star; Kensington Brava.

Romantic Suspense - Romantic novels with strong suspense/intrigue components that enhance/support a love story. Novels can vary in length depending on subgenre but in all cases should exceed 40,000 words. Example markets: Berkley; St. Martin's Press; Kensington; Harlequin Intrigue.

Women's Fiction – Novels with a projected count between 85,000 and 110,000 words featuring stories with a strong romantic element. Heroine/hero don't need to meet early in manuscript, and doesn't require a happily ever after. Example markets: St. Martin's Press; NAL; Pocket; Bantam Dell.

Young Adult/New Adult – Young Adult novels have a projected count over 40,000 words and a strong romantic theme geared toward teen and young adult readers. Example markets: Sourcebooks Fire; Simon Pulse, Berkley Jam, Little, Brown & Co., Puffin, Scholastic, Bantam. New Adult novels are the next phase of life after Young Adult where characters between 18 and 25 encounter the struggles learning to be an adult. These books should have a strong romantic theme with a projected word count of 75,000 to 90,000 words. Example target markets: Random House - Flirt; Entangled Publishing - Embrace; Grand Central Publishing - Forever Yours.

If your entry seems to fit more than one category, make your choice based on the stronger of these elements.

- What predominates in the first few pages?
- What predominates in the plot line and setting?
- What is your target market?
- What is your projected length?

JUDGING

In the preliminary round, each entry will be judged by three trained individuals familiar with your genre, including published authors and/or RWA PRO members. The lowest score will be dropped and the remaining two scores averaged. That average will become the final score for the entry. However, if a tie among two or more entries affects our top five rankings, we will break it based on the highest dropped score.

Every effort will be made to ensure all entrants will receive their score sheets and judges' comments from this preliminary round. Even though a judge's score might be dropped, you could still benefit from that judge's written comments. The top five entries in each category will move to the final round.

Finalists in each category will be ranked by the following editors and agents:

Contemporary	Meghan Farrell, Tule Publishing Rachel Burkot, Holloway Literary Agency
Historical	Lexi Smail, Grand Central Publishing Lisa Rodgers, JABberwocky Literary Agency
Inspirational	Shana Asaro, Harlequin Love Inspired Jessica Kirkland, Blythe Daniels Agency
Paranormal/Fantasy/ Futuristic/Time Travel:	Theresa Cole, Entangled Publishing Tricia Skinner, Fuse Literary
Romantic Suspense	Tara Gavin, Kensington Publishing Corp Jennifer March Soloway, Andrea Brown Literary Agency
Women's Fiction	Caitlin Dareff, St. Martin's Press Sarah Phair, Trident Media
Young Adult/New Adult	Mekisha Telfer, Simon and Schuster Shannon Powers, McIntosh and Otis

ANNOUNCEMENTS

First round finalists will be announced in mid-April 2017. We will post this information on the WisRWA website and contact the individuals by email or phone. First round scoresheets and critiques will be provided to all contestants after this announcement.

The first place winners in each category will receive our Silver Quill Award. Second through fourth place and honorable mention winners will receive certificates. Winners will be announced on May 20, 2017 at the WisRWA Write Touch Conference.

Final placements will be posted on the WisRWA website after the conference and first place through fourth place will be published in the RWR August 2017 issue.

WisRWA FABULOUS FIVE 2017

RULES FOR ENTRY

Eligibility:

This contest is open to all authors who have not been published and have not signed a contract to be published by any non-subsidy/non-vanity publishing programs in fiction. Such programs include but are not limited to small presses, electronic publishing, and audio books. Independent authors who have published via Smashwords or similar programs in which the author bears the publishing cost are free to enter our contest. Works that have been previously self-published are not eligible for entry. Previous Fabulous Five winners are not eligible to re-enter the winning manuscript, even in revised form. Each entry must be the author's original work. No "fan fiction" is allowed.

Entry Deadline:

- All entry forms and related entries must be **received by 11:59 PM CST on March 1, 2017**. Any entries received after this date will be returned.
- An entry is not considered entered until the entry form, contest entry and payment are received.
- If you choose to submit more than one (1) entry, you must complete a separate entry form and PayPal transaction for each.
- One entry cannot be entered in multiple categories, but multiple entries in the same or multiple categories are welcome.
- The Contest Coordinator reserves the right to cancel a category if fewer than ten (10) entries are received by the deadline. We also will close a category to additional contestants when thirty-five (35) entries have already been received in that category. In either event, a reasonable effort will be made to move affected entries to the second choice categories indicated on the entry forms, presuming those categories are still open. Any entries that cannot be moved will be returned to the contestants.
- Order of entry will be determined by the date and time it is received in acceptable format by the Category Coordinator.

Entry Fees:

- The entry fee is \$18 for WisRWA members and \$25 for non-WisRWA members per entry.
- A refund will not be granted if a contestant withdraws an entry after submission.

Entry Format:

- Entries must be in proper manuscript format (double-spaced, one (1) inch margins all sides, Times New Roman with size 12 font).
- Maximum of 2,500 words per entry.
- Do not include a synopsis or cover page.
- In the header of the manuscript, please include the following information in the right hand corner of each page: contest category, title, approximate word count of finished manuscript (*not your entry word count!*), and page number. Please use the following format: **Title/ Category/ Word Count/ Page Number**
- DO NOT put your name on any manuscript pages.
- Our category coordinators will return manuscripts that do not follow our format rules. Contestants may correct and resubmit. Such submissions will be placed into our queue based on the date and time the revision is received by us.

Submission Rules:

- Please using the following naming convention for your entry: **FAB 5 Entry - [Entry Title]**
The file extensions acceptable are .doc, .docx, or .rtf.
- Any entries not set up as a Word file or not attached to the entry form will not be accepted.
- Any entries not correctly formatted will be returned with the option to resubmit before the deadline.

Category coordinators:**Contemporary:**

Jennifer Scratch
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Historical:

Sara Dahmen
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Inspirational:

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Paranormal:

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Romantic Suspense:

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Women's Fiction:

Tina Susedik
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Young Adult/New Adult:

Lori Oestreich
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Should you have any questions, please contact the **Fab Five Contest Coordinator:**
Molly Maka at fabfivecontest@gmail.com