

# High Sierra Writers Contest



## 2020 Writing Contest Guidelines

### ELIGIBILITY

Contest is open to anyone over 16 years old. Entrants between 16 and 18 must have a parent or legal guardian permission to enter the competition.

### CRITERIA

- Submissions must be original and unpublished.
- Manuscripts being considered, but not under contract, by publisher are eligible for submission in this contest.
- All entries must follow the rules written down in this document.

### CONTEST CATEGORIES

**FLASH FICTION** (up to 500 words) – Flash fiction often contains the classic story elements: protagonist, conflict, obstacles or complications, and resolution. However, unlike a traditional short story, the limited word length often forces some of these elements to remain unwritten, yet hinted at or implied in the written storyline.

**SHORT STORY** (1500 to 3000 words) – Short Stories are an invented prose narrative, shorter than a novel, that usually deals with a few characters and aims at unity of effect. It often concentrates on the creation of mood rather than plot.

**FIRST BOOK CHAPTER** (1500 to 3000 words) – The first chapter of your book but no more than 3000 words.) The chapter should include a strong opening paragraph, a compelling character, a strong voice, a good starting point, an authentic sense of place, a growing conflict, tension, and a compelling hook.

## **ENTRY FEES**

**Flash Fiction** - \$10 per entry

**Short Story** - \$15 per entry

**First Book Chapter** - \$15 per entry

**Online Entry:** Fill out the entry form on the website, enter your full name under signature, and pay your entry fee via PayPal button on the page.

**Mail-in Entry:** Print your entry form from the website, fill it out completely, sign it, and attach your check made out to High Sierra Writers and mail to: High Sierra Writers, PO Box 12241, Reno, NV 89510

**In-Person Entry:** Print your entry form out as directed above. Bring your cash or check to a High Sierra Writers meeting (assuming we will have physical meetings by October) and give it to the treasurer, Rene Averett.

## **HOW TO SUBMIT TO THE 2020 HSW WRITERS' CONTEST**

1. You may submit up to two entries in any or all categories. Each entry will require a separate fee. However, you may only win one time in any category.
2. Do not put your name on any pages of your entry; your name, phone number, and email address, along with the title of your entry, go on a cover page.
3. All contest entries must be printed in Times New Roman 12-point type and double-spaced as a WORD document.
  - a. Use one-inch margins all around.
  - b. Indent each paragraph 3 to 5 spaces.
  - c. Entries must be typed according to appropriate, professional form.
  - d. The title of the work and a page number should appear on every printed page.
  - e. Entries must be in good taste, easy to read, use proper grammar and punctuation, and correct spelling.
  - f. Do not use fancy or script fonts for your text, except when stating character thoughts, which must be in italics.
4. Do not include illustrations or pictures in the manuscript.
5. Do not staple the pages together. Use a paperclip
6. Submit the entry in an 8 ½ x 10" envelope with the cover page and entry form included.
7. Any deviation from these rules could be the basis for disqualification.

Review the guidelines one final time before submitting. No re-submissions will be accepted. Congratulations! You have taken a bold step toward believing in yourself and your writing.

## **DEADLINE**

You may begin submitting on July 7, 2020. The contest deadline is October 15, 2020. Any entries mailed in and postmarked by that date will be accepted. Be aware that if you miss a post office pick-up deadline, the postmark will be for the next day, so be sure to get it in the mail in time. You can bring the entry or entries to a High Sierra Writers meeting (if we have one) in an unmarked 8-1/2x11-inch envelope and give it to one of the contest committee members.

## **JUDGING**

Contest entries will be blind-judged by professionals who are not High Sierra Writers members. Names of the judges will be revealed when they are set. Entries will be judged on the criteria set on their judging forms. Written feedback will be given on all winning entries. Click on links to see examples:

Flash Fiction Judging Form

Short Story Judging Form  
First Book Chapter Judging Form

## **AWARDS**

Awards will be presented at the December 12, 2020, High Sierra Writers meeting. Award cash distributions will be as follows:

Flash Fiction – 1<sup>st</sup> place \$ 50, 2<sup>nd</sup> place \$25,

Short Story – 1<sup>st</sup> place \$100, 2<sup>nd</sup> place \$50

First Chapter – 1<sup>st</sup> place \$100, 2<sup>nd</sup> place \$50

All 3<sup>rd</sup> place winners will be awarded a 2021 HSW Membership (\$25 value). Winners in each category will receive a printed certificate.

## **NEED HELP?**

If you have questions about the Guidelines, send an email to [board@highsierrawriters.org](mailto:board@highsierrawriters.org). Put **HSW Contest** in the subject line.

Technical questions relating to digital submissions, email [RPAverett@gmail.com](mailto:RPAverett@gmail.com). Put **HSW Contest – Tech** in the subject line.

Committee members are Rene Averett, Matt Bayan, Troy Becker, and Jay Leavitt.

**HIGH SIERRA WRITERS' 2020 WRITING CONTEST: FLASH FICTION**

Judge #: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

---

Please rate the author on each item on a scale of 1 to 10 with 1 being “needs a lot of work”, 5 being average, and 10 being outstanding. Add up the points for a total rating. In the case of a tie, you may be asked to confer with the other judge in your category.

\_\_\_\_\_ **Originality:** The piece shows a freshness of imagination, creativity, and individuality.

\_\_\_\_\_ **Plot Structure:** The piece is a complete story with beginning, middle, and a satisfying conclusion.

\_\_\_\_\_ **Characterization:** Characters are vivid and compelling.

\_\_\_\_\_ **Quality of Writing:** Organization is logical and effective. Voice is individual and appropriate. Sentence fluency is smooth and expressive.

\_\_\_\_\_ **TOTAL POINTS**

Additional Comments:

---

---

---

---

On winning submissions, including honorable mention, please give the writer some written feedback. It is optional whether or not you give feedback on other entries. Please indicate what you liked and/or how to improve this submission.

**HIGH SIERRA WRITERS' 2020 WRITING CONTEST: SHORT STORY**

Judge #: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

---

Please rate the author on each item on a scale of 1 to 10 with 1 being “needs a lot of work”, 5 being average, and 10 being outstanding. Add up the points for a total rating. In the case of a tie, you may be asked to confer with the other judge in your category.

\_\_\_\_\_ **Originality:** The piece shows a freshness of imagination, creativity, and individuality.

\_\_\_\_\_ **Plot Structure:** Enough information is provided to understand the story. Conflict emerges early and builds toward resolution. The sequence of events, dialog, and emotional movements are well crafted. Situations needing resolution are closed. Subtle undercurrents (if any) emerge during resolution.

\_\_\_\_\_ **Character Development and Dialog:** The reader can relate to the characters; they are able to hold the reader’s attention. Actions and interactions are consistent and well-motivated. Dialog shows the characters to the readers for who they really are.

\_\_\_\_\_ **Quality of Writing:** Organization is logical and effective. Voice is individual and appropriate. Sentence fluency is smooth and expressive.

\_\_\_\_\_ **TOTAL POINTS**

Additional Comments:

---

---

---

On winning submissions, including Honorable Mention, please give the writer some written feedback. It is optional whether or not you give feedback on other entries. Please indicate what you liked and/or how to improve this submission.

**HIGH SIERRA WRITERS' 2020 WRITING CONTEST: FIRST CHAPTER**

Judge #: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

---

Please rate the author on each item on a scale of 1 to 10 with 1 being “needs a lot of work”, 5 being average, and 10 being outstanding. Add up the points for a total rating. In the case of a tie, you may be asked to confer with the other judge in your category.

\_\_\_\_\_ **Originality:** The piece shows a freshness of imagination, creativity, and individuality.

\_\_\_\_\_ **Plot Structure:** Enough information is provided to understand the story. Conflict emerges early and builds. The sequence of events, dialog, and emotional movements are well crafted.

\_\_\_\_\_ **Character Development and Dialog:** The reader can relate to the characters; they are able to hold the reader’s attention. Actions and interactions are consistent and well-motivated. Dialog shows the characters to the readers for who they really are.

\_\_\_\_\_ **Quality of Writing:** Organization is logical and effective. Voice is individual and appropriate. Word choice is specific and memorable. Sentence fluency is smooth and expressive.

\_\_\_\_\_ **Hook:** The chapter ends with a strong hook to pull the reader to the next chapter.

\_\_\_\_\_ **TOTAL POINTS**

Additional Comments:

---

---

---

---

On winning submissions, including Honorable Mention, please give the writer some written feedback. It is optional whether or not you give feedback on other entries. Please indicate what you liked and/or how to improve this submission.

# High Sierra Writers Contest

2020 Official Entry Form

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

**NO MORE THAN TWO ENTRIES PER CATEGORY. ONE TITLE PER LINE.**

**ALL ENTRIES MUST BE RECEIVED OR POSTMARKED NO LATER THAN  
OCTOBER 15, 2020. ENTRIES MAY BE HANDED TO AN HSW BOARD MEMBER  
ANY TIME BEFORE THE DEADLINE.**

FLASH FICTION (500 words maximum)

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

SHORT STORY (1500 to 3000 words)

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

FIRST BOOK CHAPTER (1500 TO 3000 words)

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

ENTRY FEES:

Flash Fiction = \$10 per entry

Short Story and First Chapter = \$15 per entry

Total Enclosed: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Sign: \_\_\_\_\_

If you are under 18, parent or guardian must sign below

I give permission for my child to enter this writing contest.

Sign: \_\_\_\_\_

All stories entered into the HSW competition remain the property of the person submitting although HSW may publish all or part of the winning entries on the HSW website for three months or less with permission granted separately.