



CONTESTS: ARE YOU UP FOR THE COMPETITION?

Why Should I Enter a Writing Competition?
What Competitions Should I Enter?
How? A Small Sample



Why should I enter a competition?

- VALIDATION AS A WRITER

- Is my book or story as good as I think it is?

- INCENTIVE TO WRITE

- The more you write, the better you'll get.

- MONETARY REWARD?

- Some contests offer cash prizes – many (maybe most) do not. Most cash prizes are small.

- FEEDBACK

- Some competitions offer detailed commentary in the form of rubrics.
- Example:
 - Florida Writers Association's (FWA) -
Royal Palm Literary Awards (RPLA)

Why should I enter a competition?

- **PROMOTION!** One of the most important reasons to enter a competition.

Competitions announce semi-finalists, finalists, and winners in press releases and via their social media accounts.

- Many competitions have thousands of social media followers that receive their notifications.
- Each level of award can help you promote your book.
 - Badges are issued for each level achieved. Each is an opportunity to promote yourself & your book.
 - Some competitions, like FAPA, include award-winning books in their on-line store.



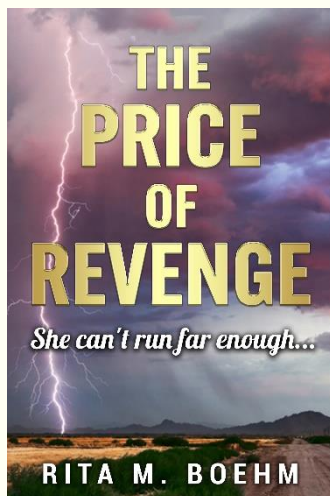
Why should I enter a competition?

- PROMOTION (cont'd)

Add awards to business cards, emails, social media, website, and book covers –
'AWARD-WINNING AUTHOR', 'MULTI-AWARD-WINNING BOOK',

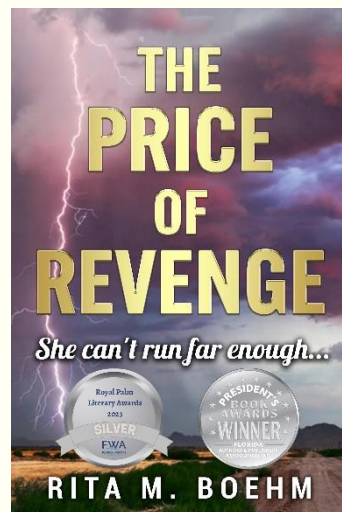
Example: What books are you more likely to pick up?

- BEFORE



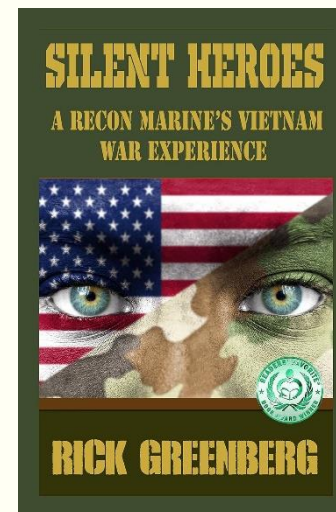
- AFTER

(cover includes 2 silver medals)



- AFTER

Reader's Favorite award



- AFTER

Series Grand Prize
CIBA (Chanticleer International Book Awards)



Why should I enter a competition?

- **PROMOTION (other examples)**

- Email closings:

- **Jeanne E. Rogers, Award Winning Author**

- **The Sword of Demelza, The Gift of Sunderland,**
 - **One Hot Mess, A Child's Environmental Fable,**
 - **Kohana, A Native American Creation Myth, and**
 - **Dressing for Dreamtime, an Aboriginal Tale**

- **Mark Newhouse**



- **The Devil's Bookkeepers**
 - **A story you will never forget**
 - **Grand Prize Fiction Series (Chanticleer International Book Awards)**
 - **Gold Medal Historical Fiction & Book of the Year - Florida Writers Association**
 - Visit newhousecreativegroup.com for more great books,

-

Why should I enter a competition?

- More promotional opportunities:
 - Create sell sheets like this one created by Jeanne Rogers for KOHANA, listing all the awards that her books have won.
 - Same information can be included on the back cover of a book or in the book in an “Other books by this author” page.

KOHANA

A Native American Creation Myth

By J.E. Rogers

THIS EXCITING AND BEAUTIFULLY ILLUSTRATED story is based on a Native American creation myth. Myth has always played an important part in helping humans to understand and explain the unexplainable. Native American myth played an important role in helping America's indigenous peoples live in harmony with the natural world, express awe for its beauty, and celebrate its bounty. Not only does *Kohana* bring to life the myth of how the wolf became the dog, the book provides a glimpse into Native American wisdom, culture, beliefs, and the philosophy that all living things are connected.

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Available through: Baker & Taylor, Barnes & Noble, Follett School Solutions, Amazon.com, or directly from the publisher.



Hardcover, case wrapped, dust jacket, 40 pages,
15 color illustrations. Ages 5 to 10.
Trim size 8"x10".

Awards & Praise for *The Gift of Sunderland*, by J.E. Rogers

WINNER! Benjamin Franklin Gold Digital Award Honoree

"The prose and plot is just beautiful—I would happily recommend this to anyone..." Judge, Benjamin Franklin Digital Awards

WINNER! Gold Medal – Moonbeam Children's Book Awards

WINNER! First Place – Purple Dragonfly Children's Book Awards

WINNER! Silver Medal – Literary Int'l Classics

Awards & Praise for *The Sword of Demelza*, by J.E. Rogers

WRITER'S DIGEST Winner! Honorable Mention – 2013 eBook Awards

"Beyond excellent, from the terrific illustrations on the cover and throughout the book, so well-placed by the author to convey the characters' depth in plot."

— Judge, Writer's Digest eBook Awards 2013

BOOK OF THE YEAR FINALIST – ForeWord Reviews

"Told in crisp, page-turning prose, readers of all ages will find this to be an engaging novel built around a framework of moral guidance."

PUBLISHERS WEEKLY – "In this entertaining debut, Rogers uses her love of Australian wildlife to deliver a rousing Redwalleque fantasy, in which a coalition of creatures embarks on an epic quest."

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN DIGITAL GOLD HONOREE – "There are a number of books with anthropomorphized animals, but there is no other book quite like this one. *The Sword of Demelza*, is unlike any anthropomorphized animal story on the market today."

MOONBEAM CHILDREN'S BOOK AWARDS – 2014 GOLD MEDAL WINNER

WHAT CONTESTS SHOULD I ENTER?

- THERE ARE HUNDREDS OF WRITING COMPETITIONS!
 - Regional – National – International - Genre Specific
- ASK FRIENDS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS.
- BE WARY OF SCAMS!
 - A legitimate contest will provide clear rules, including information about entry categories, deadlines, eligibility, format, fees, prizes and the circumstances in which they will or will not be awarded, judging, and (very important) any rights you may be surrendering.
 - If you can't find these, don't enter.
- ENTRY GUIDELINES
 - All contests have very specific entry guidelines which must be followed.
 - Enter contests online
 - Upload your story, poem, blog, article, or book (including children's picture books)
 - Upload your book cover (as applicable)

WHAT CONTESTS SHOULD I ENTER?

- SOME CONTESTS FAMILIAR TO WLOV MEMBERS:
 - FLORIDA WRITER ASSOCIATION (FWA) ROYAL PALM LITERARY AWARDS (RPLA)
 - Many WLOV winners for both Book of the Year and genre awards
 - FLORIDA AUTHORS AND PUBLISHERS ASSOCIATION (FAPA) PRESIDENT'S AWARD
 - WLOV winners in a variety of genre categories
 - CHANTICLEER INTERNATIONAL BOOK AWARDS (CIBA)
 - Mark Newhouse won Grand Prize Series. Others have done well in genre-specific categories
 - AMERICAN BOOKFEST AWARDS
 - A number of WLOV members have received various levels of award.
 - BRAM STOKER - presented annually by the Horror Writers Association (HWA) for "superior achievement" in dark fantasy and horror.
 - Steve Burt won a Bram Stoker Award

WHAT CONTESTS SHOULD I ENTER?

MORE GREAT CONTESTS FAMILIAR TO WLOV MEMBERS:

- Independent Book Publishers Association – Ben Franklin Awards
 - Specifically for books NOT published by traditional publishers
 - <https://www.ibpabenjaminfranklinaward.com>
 - Non members: \$229 for initial entry plus \$95 for additional entries; Members: \$95 per entry
 - 2024 competition: Only books published in 2023 – none earlier
- Readers' Favorite Book Reviews and Awards
 - <https://readersfavorite.com/annual-book-award-contest.htm>
 - International Award Competition
 - Entry deadline: April 1, 2024
 - Entry fee: range from \$99 to \$119.
 - No publication date requirement
 - Options for free or paid reviews

WHAT CONTESTS SHOULD I ENTER?

- PLACES TO GO TO FIND MORE CONTESTS:

- REEDSY.COM: Best Writing Contests

- Go to: <https://blog.reedsy.com/writing-contests/>

- WINNINGWRITERS.COM

- Sample of contests:

- Tom Howard/John H. Reid Fiction & Essay Contest

- <https://winningwriters.com/our-contests/tom-howard-john-h-reid-fiction-essay-contest>

- Deadline: May 1, 2024

- Wergle Flomp Humor Poetry Contest

- <https://winningwriters.com/our-contests/wergle-flomp-humor-poetry-contest-free>

- Deadline: April 1, 2024

FLORIDA WRITERS ASSOCIATION (FWA) RPLA COMPETITION

Details: Requires annual membership - \$49. plus an entry fee

Contest closes on 4/30 of each year

Adult Entry Fee Schedule	February	March	April
▪ Poetry, Flash Fiction, Short-Short Fiction	\$20	\$30	\$40
▪ Short Entries, Children’s Picture Book	\$30	\$45	\$65
▪ Book-Length Entries	\$40	\$60	\$90

Number of categories: 25 (plus many potential blended categories) ranging from short works, poetry, articles, blogs, book-length entries and anthologies

Either published or unpublished work may be submitted – judged separately.

Entering unpublished presents an opportunity to gain feedback – and then resubmit when finally published.

Note: 2024 Competition - Published works = FIRST copyright date of 2022, 2023 or 2024

FLORIDA WRITERS ASSOCIATION (FWA) RPLA COMPETITION

- FEEDBACK - RUBRICS - Royal Palm Literary Awards
 - Entrants receive up to 3 sets of rubrics, each consisting of ratings on 10 criteria.
 - Unpublished entries receive more than just a numerical rating

Fiction criteria:

1. Genre – appropriateness of genre choice
2. Hook – strength of first few sentences to hook readers
3. Language & POV – style, narrative voice...
4. Creativity – in areas such as concept, theme, and premise
5. Description – effectiveness of setting, sensory elements...
6. Character – how well drawn, etc
7. Dialogue – balance of narration to dialogue and authenticity
8. Plot – pacing, effectiveness of conflict, etc
9. Mechanics – grammar, spelling, syntax - enhancing or hindering work
10. Overall Impression – how well work comes across as a whole.

FLORIDA WRITERS ASSOCIATION (FWA) RPLA COMPETITION

SAMPLE RUBRICS SHEET SHOWING RANKINGS FOR FIRST 5 CATEGORIES OF A PUBLISHED SUBMISSION

Needs complete overhaul	Needs significant work	Needs moderate work	Needs light work	Excellent to exceptional	Superior: work of genius [use rarely]
CRITERIA					
Note: Genre definition is located above.					
Criterion 1: Genre					Genre Score: <u>10</u>
Consider appropriateness of genre choice. Stories need not follow the genre's formula precisely but should contain the genre's essential elements. If the story fits the primary genre requirements for THIS genre, as defined by RPLA, it should receive a 9 or 10. (Refer to synopsis if appropriate.) If the genre selection is deemed inappropriate, please contact the chair. [Note to entrants: Choosing a genre for submission to a competition, agency, or publisher is an important skill, which is why RPLA scores this element.]					
Criterion 2: Hook					Hook Score: <u>8</u>
Consider the strength of the first few sentences in establishing a strong opening and the effectiveness of the opening scene(s) and/or first chapter in defining the unique take on character, conflict, or setup.					
Criterion 3: Language					Language Score: <u>9</u>
Assess language use, style, and narrative voice. Consider whether the vocabulary sustains or enhances the voice. If there are inconsistencies, determine whether they are purposeful and effective. [Note: These considerations are distinct from language used in dialogue, which is evaluated under the Dialogue criterion.] Consider the effectiveness of point of view (POV) and whether POV shifts, if any, are executed appropriately. Take into account other language- and POV-related issues, if any, as appropriate.					
Criterion 4: Creativity					Creativity Score: <u>9</u>
Consider whether the story is creative in such areas as concept, theme, and premise. [Note: This is an overall assessment of creativity; creativity within specific elements, such as dialogue, character, description, etc., should be considered within those elements.]					
Criterion 5: Description					Description Score: <u>9</u>
Assess the effectiveness of the setting(s), particularly how they illustrate a point, character, or mood. Consider whether sensory elements are vivid, effective, and appropriate. Consider other issues, if any, relating to description and sensory appeal, as appropriate.					

FLORIDA WRITERS ASSOCIATION (FWA) RPLA COMPETITION

FWA RPLA (cont'd)

- Submission Details - laid out in 2024 Adult Entry Guidelines
- Book length entries have more requirements than short stories.
 - Example: Books require a SYNOPSIS of 200 – 500 WORDS with specific file naming: Titleofwork_SYN_PDF
- Unpublished work is formatted differently from published work
- Each year changes are made:
 - New for 2024: Biography and History Genres Added
 - “General Catch-All category deleted
- Judging: initially, 2 judges read 30 pages of a book. If score is high enough to qualify as a semi-finalist, book goes on to a 3rd judge who reads the entire book. 3rd judge’s score counts as double.
- Awards made at banquet in October: acrylic plaque, book stickers & digital medal

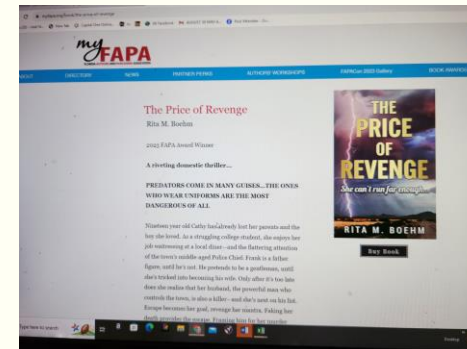


FLORIDA AUTHORS AND PUBLISHERS ASSOCIATION (FAPA) - PRESIDENT'S BOOK AWARDS

- MEMBERSHIP IN FAPA IS NOT A REQUIREMENT (Members get a discounted rate)
Rates range from \$65 to \$95 depending on when entry is submitted (October through April)
- CONTEST CLOSING DATE: 4/30 OF EACH YEAR
- CATEGORIES: Set up differently from the Florida Writers Assoc (FWA) RPLA.
 - 35 different categories + 4 categories for Cover Design
- JUDGING: All entries are judged by 3 judges based on content, theme, layout, editing, and relevance to the category entered.

FLORIDA AUTHORS AND PUBLISHERS ASSOCIATION (FAPA) - PRESIDENT'S BOOK AWARDS

- Finalists are notified and awards are made at the annual awards dinner in August.
- Awards: bronze, silver and gold - based on scoring.
 - Note: If more than one entry achieves a high-enough score, more than one bronze, silver or gold may be awarded in that category. If no entry receives appropriate point score, award will not be made.
- Awards are made at annual dinner – or sent directly to winners.
 - Award-winning books are sold at FAPA online store
 - Award winners receive a medal plus
 - Digital badge and stickers to affix to books





READER'S FAVORITE BOOK REVIEWS AND AWARDS

- ANNUAL BOOK AWARD CONTEST - International Competition
 - Contest has received excellent reviews from sources like Penguin Random House and Huffington Post

 - Deadline: Early-bird entries April 1, 2024 - \$99. ea
 - Final entry June 1, 2024 - \$119.
 - <https://readersfavorite.com>
 - Manuscripts, published and unpublished books, eBooks, audiobooks, comic books, poetry and short stories in 150 genres
 - Award ceremony in Miami, Florida during week of Miami Book Fair International
 - 4 levels of award: Honorable mention, bronze, silver, gold
 - Winners announced on September 1.

READER'S FAVORITE BOOK REVIEWS AND AWARDS

- BOOK REVIEWS

- <https://readersfavorite.com/book-reviews.htm>

- Both free and paid for reviews are offered.

- Free Review: usually within 90 days, but due to large number of requests, book may not get reviewed.

- Express & Express Package Options

- From \$59 to \$199.

- Price based on the specific package and extras

- Two week turnaround

- ONLY 4 AND 5 STAR REVIEWS ARE POSTED

- If you receive a lower ranking, they will provide a critique to allow you to improve the manuscript and resubmit

CHANTICLEER INTERNATIONAL BOOK AWARDS (CIBA)



- ANOTHER MAJOR INTERNATIONAL COMPETITION
 - \$99. PER ENTRY EXCEPT FOR “LITTLE PEEPS” CHILDREN’S BOOKS = \$55.
 - CONTEST RUNS ALL YEAR – 26 DIVISIONS
 - EACH CATEGORY HAS DIFFERENT CONTEST CLOSING DATES
 - SEPARATE CONTEST FOR SHORT STORIES, ESSAYS, NOVELETTES, AND NOVELLAS
 - \$45. PER ENTRY
- 
- A NUMBER OF WLOV MEMBERS HAVE DONE WELL IN THIS COMPETITION
 - Award are presented at their annual conference in Washington state in April of each year.
 - NOTE: They also offer book review services starting at \$495.

CHANTICLEER INTERNATIONAL BOOK AWARDS

Mark Newhouse won a Grand Prize award.

Maybe you can too!





CONTESTS: ARE
YOU UP FOR THE
COMPETITION ?

OF COURSE YOU ARE!!!
Comments? Contest Experiences

