

WisRWA's FABULOUS FIVE WRITING CONTEST

We're gearing up for 2012

Here's what prior contestants have to say:

In 2007 I submitted a fledgling Robin Hood-themed manuscript to Wisconsin RWA's Fab Five. What an amazing feeling when it became my first contest final! The positive responses and generous feedback I received from judges helped me believe in my novel like nothing else could, convincing me to pitch at Nationals--a pitch that led to my first sale. What a Scoundrel Wants was released in December 2008 as part of the Zebra Debut program. I have achieved other successes since, but I like to think my journey started with Fab Five.

Carrie Lofty, finalist 2007 historical category

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I think I cried when I got the news I was a finalist in The Fab Five contest. It was my first book, and the judge's comments really inspired me to keep writing. Writing (especially when you're unpublished) is a lonely profession, but the Fab Five contest really gave me the boost I needed – it was confirmation that my stories actually had potential. Who knew that just a few years later I'd be a NY Times & USA Today bestselling author!

~Simone Elkeles, 2010 RITA winner for Perfect Chemistry

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And here are the basics for 2012:

- 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!

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.

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.

Series Contemporary Long/Short - Romantic novels with a projected count between 40,000 and 70,000 words including short series romances. Released each month. The love story is the main focus. Example markets: Silhouette Desire; Harlequin Romance, Blaze and American.

Single Title Romance - Romantic novels with a projected count over 75,000 words including long series romances. More involved plotlines & secondary plots than Series Contemporary, but with a Happily Ever After ending (HEA). Example markets: Sourcebooks; Avon; Pocket; HQN; Kensington; Grand Central Publishing.

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 HEA. Example markets: St. Martin's Press; NAL; Pocket; Bantam Dell.

Young Adult – Novels with 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, MTV Books, Little, Brown & Co., Puffin, Scholastic, Bantam.

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?

Order of entry will be determined by the date and time each is received by the category coordinator. Certain categories may be closed if they exceed thirty (30) contestants. Get your entry in early!

Our turnaround time for judging first round as well as final round is tight. Any entries received after 11:59 PM (Central Standard Time) on March 1, 2012 will be returned.

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/agents:

Historical: Deb Werksman, Sourcebooks

Paranormal: Angela James, Carina Press

Romantic Suspense: Katherine Pelz, Berkley Publishing

Series Contemporary (L/S): Megan Long, Harlequin Enterprises

Single Title: Nalini Akolekar, Spencerhill Associates

Women's Fiction: Paige Wheeler, Folio Literary Agency

Young Adult: Melissa Frain, Tor

Announcements

First round finalists will be announced in mid-April 2012. We will post this information on the WisRWA website and contact the individuals by email or phone. First round scorecards 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 at WisRWA's Write Touch Conference, June 1-3, 2012. Final placements will be posted on the WisRWA website after the conference and will be published in the RWR August 2012 issue.

WISRWA FABULOUS FIVE 2012 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 in full-length fiction (at least 65,000 words in length) by any non-subsidy/non-vanity publishing programs in the past five years. 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. 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 & Mailing:

- All entry forms and related entries must be **received by 11:59 PM CST on March 1, 2012**. Any entries received after this date will be returned.
- **Entries** must be **emailed** to the applicable Category Coordinator listed on the entry form.
- We prefer that you email the entry form as well. However, if you pay the entry fee by check, you may include your entry form in that envelope, addressed to the applicable Category Coordinator.
- **Do not send your entry form or payment by any means that requires a signature. They will NOT be accepted.**
- If you choose to submit more than one entry, use a separate entry form for each one.
- One entry cannot be entered in multiple categories, but multiple entries in the same or multiple categories are welcome.
- We strive to obtain a minimum fifteen (15) entries per category, and the Contest Coordinator reserves the right to cancel a category if fewer entries are received by the deadline. We also may close a category to additional contestants when thirty (30) or more 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 by the category coordinator.

Entry Fees:

- Each entry fee is \$18 for WisRWA members and \$20 for non-WisRWA members.
- 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 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.
- At the top of each manuscript page include contest category, title, approximate word count of finished manuscript (*not your entry word count!*), and page number.
- DO NOT put your name on any manuscript pages.
- Our category coordinators will correct minor font and margin errors but will return manuscripts that do not follow our other format rules. Contestants may correct and resubmit these. Such submissions will be placed into our queue based on the date and time the revision is received by us.

Submission Rules:

- Submit the entry as an attachment in an email to the appropriate category coordinator. In the subject line put FAB 5 entry followed by your entry title.
EXAMPLE: FAB 5 entry—Born to Win.
- Send the entry file as a Microsoft Word document. If you created the document using the Microsoft Vista or Windows 7 operating system or Office 2007 or newer, save and submit the entry in an earlier version of Word.
- Any entries not set up as a Word file or not included as an email attachment will not be accepted.
- Use the PayPal button on our website to cover your entry fee, or mail a check (made out to WisRWA) to the applicable category coordinator.

- Submit one (1) completed and signed entry form and agreement for each entry, preferably as a second attachment to your email. If you submit your entry form and a check using first class mail, let us know in your entry email.
- If you pay by check, there will be a \$25 charge for NSF checks.
- If you use the PayPal option, you must include the PayPal transaction ID number, transaction date and amount for each entry on the entry form.
- If you enter more than one manuscript in the same category, you can write one check or include all entries for that category in one PayPal transaction. If you enter different categories, separate payments MUST be made for each category.

Category coordinators:

Historical

Jody Allen; 302 South 11th Avenue, West Bend, WI 53095; fab5history@gmail.com

Paranormal

December Gephart; 2009 Mt. Vernon St.; Oshkosh, WI 54901; fabfiveparanormal@yahoo.com

Romantic Suspense

Molly Maka; 8705 S. Wood Creek Dr. #1, Oak Creek, WI 53154; fabfiveRS@yahoo.com

Series Contemporary (Long/Short)

Helen Johannes; 512 W. Cleveland St., Marshfield, WI 54449; fabfiveSC@yahoo.com

Single Title

Mackenzie Kramer; 2417 E. Stratford Court, Shorewood, WI 53211; fabfivesingletitle@yahoo.com

Young Adult

Justen Hisle; 1312 W. Liebau Road, Mequon, WI 53092; FabFiveYA@yahoo.com

Women's Fiction

Valerie Clarizio; 1160 S. Ridgeway Drive, Sturgeon Bay, WI 54235; FabFiveWomens@yahoo.com

Should you have any questions, please contact the FabFive Contest Coordinator:
Joe Fraser at jfraser6353@yahoo.com