

Big Things Coming Your December FWA News

Dear Marvelous Member,

We're wrapping up the end of 2020 (Hallelujah!) and getting ready to spring into the new year. We have a lot planned for 2021, and can't wait to share it with you. One of our big goals is to give you more bang for your buck with your FWA membership. We know there are plenty of other writing organizations out there, but we want to outshine the others with what we have to offer. Be sure to read all the way through this newsletter to learn about:

- the dates for the 20th Annual Florida Writers Conference
- important RPLA updates and changes
- *New!* information about the Florida Writers Book Expo sales event
- a merchandise clearance sale
- the winners of the FWF Colors of the Holidays Competition
- *New!* the Member Book of the Month (and how to sign up!)
- writing prompts about something broken

We wish you a wonderful holiday season and look forward to new adventures in the new year!

-Your FWA leadership team

[10 Things to Know About Writing](#)

[Scenes](#)

[Writing Stories with an Emotional](#)

[Bang](#)

[Gifts for Writers: Beyond the Journal](#)

[14 Gmail Hacks for Writers](#)

[Facebook Changed Its Algorithms](#)

["Tug on My Heart" Amy Nicolai](#)

[The Great Balancing Act](#)

[On Switching Genre](#)

[Can you be friends with your](#)

[protagonist?](#)

Save the Date!

20th Annual Florida Writers Conference

Get your calendar out (or open it on your phone) and save the date for FWA's big 20th anniversary event! Our annual conference will be held on October 14 - October 17, 2021. We've had twenty years to make our mark on the writing landscape of Florida. What's your plan to make your mark on the literary world? Learn, network, and grow on your writing journey at our annual conference!

We are planning to do the event in person this year, pending the status of the current global health crisis. If conditions make it unsafe for attendees, we will reverse course and continue with an online platform. Stay tuned for updates.

RPLA will accept 2021 submissions February 1 through April 30. For the lowest entry fees, plan to enter early. Here's a sneak peek at some of the changes for this year. Details will be posted to the website in January.

- **An easier entry form.** The new entry form will auto-fill many of the fields from your member records, saving you keystrokes. You'll also be able to save your form to complete later, should you be interrupted in the process of filling it out.
- **Uploading of entries.** No more emailing of entries; there will be an easier upload feature.
- **Entry caps.** Hey, we need to allow judges to continue to devote adequate time to evaluating each entry and to provide thoughtful feedback (it takes longer than one would think!). *Yes, we're talking entry caps: 5 entries, max, per person; 500-entry cutoff total.* (Historically, the average entrant submits 1.9 entries a year, and once the duplicate and withdrawn entries are culled out, RPLA has yet to exceed 500 qualified entries. Still, we don't know what 2021 will bring, so word to the wise: enter early!)
- **Plagiarism checks.** We're instituting plagiarism checks to ensure that your original work competes only with original works from other entrants.

From the RPLA team, have a wonderful holiday and even better year ahead. Best of luck in the competition!

-Chris Coward, RPLA Chair

The Florida Writers Association Collection is an annual writing competition that showcases member writing and helps members grow their skills. Each year, entrants write to a theme and sixty submissions are chosen for publication. A “Person of Renown” chooses ten stories for special recognition. This year, the theme is "Footprints" and the Person of Renown will be Marina Brown.

The Collection Competition will be open for submissions from February 1, 2021 - April 30, 2021.

Take the Footprints theme where your muse leads. Is it an area on a surface covered by something? Like a tire that makes a wide footprint, or the footprint of a laser beam, or the range of operation (as of a service) - a global footprint. Perhaps it's a marked effect, impression, or impact as in a footprint in the field of research? Anything is possible. Fiction, non-fiction, essays (maximum: 1,200 words), and poetry (maximum 50 lines) are all eligible.

[Collection Guidelines](#)

Live Early January: Our New Website!

Check out the header above. The box on the right side says "Member Login." That's right, we are going to have a whole network of exclusive features and content for members only. We will be rolling out new features in phases, and Marketing Chair Arielle Haughee will be creating tutorial videos to show how to access and use them. Watch your email for updates!

Join Our Facebook Group!

Save the Date! **Florida Writers Book Expo**

We have a new event we will be launching next year. The Florida Writers Book Expo will be an online book selling event where members will be able to purchase a virtual booth to feature their books. The event will be marketed to readers, and we will be planning incentives to visit and purchase. Participating authors will also get access to an exclusive bonus, a marketing workshop from an industry pro with tips for today's selling trends. Mark your calendar for May 1 - May 10, 2021 for this event. More details to come!

End of the Year Sale!

We have a clearance sale on all of our vintage logo merchandise including t-shirts and hats. Shirts were previously \$15, sale price \$8. Hats were previously \$9.50, sale price \$5. [Grab yours while supplies last!](#) (Prices do not include shipping.)

We also have merchandise with our new logo (like the t-shirt above, logo on back) in our [Etsy shop](#). All proceeds from merchandise go towards bringing you more FWA programs and events!

Making Your 2021 Promotion Plan?

Be sure to add advertising in *The Florida Writer* magazine and free announcements in the Celebrations section to your plan. Members receive a discount on advertising and an even deeper discount for 4-6 ads placed

consecutively. Submission requirements for Celebrations can be found on page 2 of every issue of the magazine.

[See TFW Ad Rates](#)

Get published as a free member benefit! There's still time to submit to Paragraphs for the next edition of TFW! The deadline is January 1st. The theme is: "Write a piece that begins with these words: *The last time.*" Maximum word count for prose, 700; maximum line count for poetry, 50. Title is included in word count. One entry per issue, per person. [Click here to see the full requirements.](#)

From the Florida Writers Foundation

After receiving \$775 in donations throughout the month of November and forty-four total entries, nearly forty people gathered on December 5th via Zoom to recognize our winners, celebrate writers everywhere, and rejoice at the funds we can use to further literacy. And, the [Florida Writers Foundation](#) received another \$75 in donations!

In the Poetry category, our 2nd runner-up is Su Gerheim, whose poem was titled Ode to Colors of the Holidays. The 1st runner up is Caregiver's Christmas by Phyllis Brace McKinley. And the winner of the Poetry category is Thornton Blease who submitted Hearts Waiting in the Snow.

The Prose category produced a 2nd runner-up with Holiday Hues by Marie Brack. The 1st runner-up is Gladys' Cookies by Myrna Ossin. And the winner of the Prose category is Elizabeth Vollstadt's short story titled A Glimpse of Christmas Joy.

There have been calls to make this an annual event, so no doubt we will be more organized next year, but we will be hard pressed to generate more enthusiasm, receive better entries, or have a celebratory event that outshines last night.

Sincere thanks to everyone who helped with the organizing, behind-the-scenes work, judging, and most of all, thanks to writers who contributed their sentiments this holiday season and those who donated funds to help us continue to spread the love of reading and writing around the state of Florida.

FWAY CATCHES THE WAVE TO RPLA SUCCESS

Inspired by our new logo, FWAY members are readying themselves for this year's RPLA and Collection competitions. Our special guest for this month's 2nd Tuesday FWAY Online Writing Club, was Chris Coward, RPLA Coordinator, who offered her expertise on preparing for this prestigious competition as well as useful information for our young writers. Hosted by Michael Farrell, our youth Representative to the FWA Board of Directors, and Paula Feuerstein, FWAY Co-chair, this session on Zoom followed previous sessions featuring special guests Allison Nissen, who discussed podcasts, and former FWA President, and FWA Marketing guru, Arielled Haughee. FWAY welcomes middle and high school students who love writing. The 2nd Tuesday FWAY Online Writing Club meets on Zoom, 7-9PM and we're always on the lookout for FWA authors who would like to meet our talented young members.

[Visit their website here](#)

We've heard from several of our members that they would really like the organization to help them sell more books. One initiative is the Book Expo mentioned above and another is the Member Book of the Month feature. (Other ideas are currently being tested.) One person will be randomly selected from those who sign up to have their book featured.

The best part: **This will be totally free for members.** All you have to do is click on the link below the featured book to sign up for the next month. There will be a fresh link every month, and it only takes a minute to sign up. So be sure to always scroll all the way to the bottom like you did with this newsletter!

Be sure to sign up for the next month by the 20th.

Rehoming Pigeon by Joanne Tailele

When Cecile Boudreaux and husband, Armand, adopt six-year-old Natalia from Russia, they think their dreams of being a whole family are complete. But things don't go exactly as planned. Natalia has her own agenda to get back to her brother, Nikolai no matter what. When things reach a breaking point, unthinkable decisions have to be made. It will take love and loss before everyone recognizes the many faces of family. Click [here to watch a trailer](#) or on the image to buy!

Support your fellow members and consider purchasing the Member Book of the Month. If you do, be sure to leave a review!

[Sign up for January BOM](#)

