

2021 Sarasota Fiction Writers Contest

Prizes: \$100; \$50; \$25; Hon Mention; and Trophies).

Rules and Guidelines

1. Open to paid SFW members only.
2. This year's theme is **Holidays**
 - a. The story must be fiction (creative non-fiction is allowed). Can be based upon your own experiences, family legends, or purely imaginary—as long as it is based upon a real holiday. Must be a short story, *not a travel piece*, day-in-the-life-of, or memoir, etc. Not limited to a within the USA. Not limited to American holidays. Can include holiday experiences during COVID, or as early as your own memories allow. Can be historical—again, as long as it is based upon a real holiday.
 - b. Can be frightening, dramatic, romantic, thrilling, humorous, etc.
 - c. *Any genre is acceptable as long as it is not pornographic.*
3. Here are just a few thoughts to get your mind cooking:
 - A. A few children could be characters in the story. They could be major, minor, even very minor, or the protagonist, or the antagonist, but present in some capacity.
 - B. Can be a little spooky, a drama, serious or funny, even slapstick
 - C. Let creativity have free reign!!! Long live the writer's brain!!!!
 - D. You have some latitude as far as the theme is concerned. The story may meander a bit, but we will hold you to the basic idea.
 - E. Contest deadline: June 1st. Prizes will be awarded, but we are working out the time and means—due to the unpredictability of COVID, of course.
 - F. Must not exceed 2500 words.
 - G. I have previously attached some eclectic photographs. Some of them have not done well in my emails; some have been fine, others not. Therefore, I haven't attached any of them this time. I'm working on ways to send all of them. The photos, if you have seen any of them, are not intended as requirements, but only as wellsprings, or prompts, inspiration. They are only meant to be helpful. You do not have to use any of them at all. Look them over, one of them might help you get started.
 - H. Must be reasonably well edited. We are not going to be so picky as to disqualify over a single comma, but we are a writers group and we should hold ourselves to high standards.
 - I. Submitting the manuscript:
 - a. If submitting *electronically*: it must be **received by me no later than June 1**. Send it as an attachment to PatrickGray1@msn.com.
[* .doc; * .docx, or PDF]

- b. If submitting in *paper form*: it still must be **received by me no later than June 1**. Mail it to [Patrick Gray, 2935 Bravura Lake Drive, Sarasota, FL, 34240].

J. Formatting:

- a. As with most contests which will be judged independently, the story needs a cover sheet with the author's name, story title, and contact information. Also at the bottom of cover sheet, tell us which photographs you used as your prompts.
- b. The author's name should *not* be present on any of the story pages—only on the cover sheet.
- c. Do not staple (if paper submission) the cover sheet to the rest of the story; simply place it in the same envelope with the story. If submitting via email, put the cover sheet in a separate attachment (you would have two attachments—one for the cover sheet, and one for the story).
- d. Place the story title (or some recognizable part of it) and page numbers in the top right-hand corner of each page of the story itself. (E.g., pages 2, 3, and 4 of Poe's *The Raven* would have *The Raven/2*; *The Raven/3*; *The Raven/4* in their respective upper right-hand corners.)
- e. Use one of the common fonts (such as Courier New, Times New Roman, Georgia, or Bookman Old Style).
- f. Use 12 point, double spaced and with 1-inch margins on all sides.
- g. NOTE: Many writers have their own preferred styles of formatting, but we all must follow somebody's contest/publisher guidelines. Within our contest guidelines, you do have some freedom with the formatting, but what you submit should be done as professionally as possible. *Make it easy on the judge's eyes!*