

*In addition to our Official Rules, please review the following three categories of **Frequently Asked Questions** before entering your work. If, after reading this, you have a question, do not hesitate to contact The Spur Chairperson. Thank you for your participation.*

Question Categories:

## **PREPARING AND SUBMITTING YOUR ENTRY RESULTS GENERAL**

### **PREPARING AND SUBMITTING YOUR ENTRY:**

**Q: Will it help my chances if I include press releases, publicity kits, and/or newspaper clippings with my entry?**

**A:** No. Your published work will be judged solely on the merit of its writing.

**Q: Should I include a cover letter?**

**A:** A cover letter is not required. The only items you are required to send are (1) the published work and (2) a completed entry form.

**Q: Will you send acknowledgement that you received my entry?**

**A:** As time and other considerations permit, the Spur Chair will acknowledge receipt of submissions by email. Make sure a valid email address is included on your entry form. In addition, you are welcome to include a self-addressed stamped postcard. Fill out the message side of the postcard with name of entry, name of author, and a line or two such as “Receipt verified by  [signature of recipient] .”

**Q: Should I trust my publisher to enter my published work, or am I allowed to enter it myself?**

**A:** Authors are allowed to enter their own work, and many do so, as opposed to relying on someone else.

**Q: What about online publications? Are those eligible?**

**A:** Yes, online publications are considered eligible, as long as they comply with all other Spur Award rules. Your submission must be printed directly from the source, with date of publication clear (either on the printout, or on table of contents that verifies it as your work).

**Q: Is there a fee for entering?**

**A:** There is no fee charged for entering.

**Q: Can I enter more than one published work? If so, do they have to be mailed in separate envelopes?**

**A:** You may enter as many eligible works as you wish. Multiple entries can be included in one envelope/box, as long as each entry is accompanied by its own *completed* entry form.

**Q: Why did you italicize “completed” in the previous answer?**

**A:** In the past, we’ve received multiple entries, each with an entry form. But, only one entry form was completed. Please remember that each entry is its own entity, and will be categorized as such. Therefore, each entry form must include all pertinent information.

**Q: I don’t have extra copies of my book. Will you accept an ARC?**

**A:** ARCs (advance reading copies), galleys, and manuscripts are *not* acceptable forms of submission. You must submit the published book.

**Q: What about short works? Since authors typically don’t receive multiple copies of magazines that their writing appears in, will you accept photocopies?**

**A:** Yes, we allow photocopied submissions in the categories of Short Fiction Story, Short Nonfiction, and Poem. Each photocopied entry must include:

- 1) A photocopy of the work from the published source
- 2) A photocopy of the publication’s cover (periodicals) or copyright page (books)
- 3) A photocopy of the Table of Contents

**Q: Do both my publisher and I need to sign the entry form?**

**A:** Only one signature is required on the entry form. It can be that of the author, or it can be that of the publisher's representative.

**Q: Do I need to cover up my name on my entry?**

**A:** This is not a blind contest. Therefore, you do not need to conceal the author's name on the submitted work.

**Q: Why do I have to send four copies of my book, instead of just one?**

**A:** Each of the three judges in the category you are entering will be reading your work and reporting results to the Spur Chair. The fourth copy is sent to the Spur Chair so that it might be verified as eligible (correct copyright date/date of issue according to the rules, submitted to correct category, etc.) The Spur Chair will also verify that every judge has received all eligible entries.

**Exception:** If you are entering the First Novel category *in addition to another novel category*, you will send a total of seven copies of the work: one copy to the Spur Chair with both categories indicated on the entry form, plus one copy to each of the three judges in the two categories you are entering.

**Q: I've published a collection of short stories and poems in one book. Which book category does it belong in?**

**A:** A book-length collection of short pieces (short stories, articles/essays, poems) cannot be submitted to a book-length category. Each eligible work must be submitted to the proper Short category (Short Fiction Story, Short Nonfiction, Poem) and accompanied by a separate and complete entry form. If your collection includes multiple eligible works, you may submit one copy of the book, along with a separate entry form for each entry from that book.

**Q: Can the chapters of my serial novel be entered as short stories?**

**A:** A novel published in serial form is still a novel, and must be entered as such. The chapters cannot be entered separately as short stories.

**Q: Why was my entry to one of the judges returned? I sent it via UPS.**

**A:** Typically, Media Mail, UPS, and FedEx packages are not forwarded. Please verify addresses by checking the List of Judges at [www.westernwriters.org](http://www.westernwriters.org) for any changes. Also bear in mind that UPS and FedEx do not deliver to post office boxes. If a judge lists only a post office box address, you must use the United States Postal Service for your submission(s).

**Q: Do you accept e-mail submissions?**

**A:** No, e-mail submissions are not accepted at this time.

**Q: I'm afraid I let the holidays get in the way, and I missed the entry deadline. Can I go ahead and enter if I send my packages Priority?**

**A:** This year, we have extended the postmark deadline in order to allow time beyond the holidays. Entries *must* be postmarked on or before January 10, 2009. Therefore, our postmark deadline is firm.

*Note:* Waiting until the final days does not increase your chances of winning. Our judges consider each work on its writing merit—regardless of when it was received.

## **RESULTS:**

**Q: How can I find out who won?**

**A:** A list of winners and finalists will be posted on this web site on or about March 15, 2009. Before the list is posted, the winners and their publishers will be notified by telephone.

**Q: Can I find out if I'm still in the running before the results are announced?**

**A:** Please do not contact the Spur Chair or the judges requesting updates on their progress, information regarding the number of entries in the category/categories you entered, or to ascertain whether your work is still being considered for an award. Our judges and chairperson are working diligently to read/process the hundreds of entries received, and will report as soon as their tasks are complete.

**Q: What if I'm a winner/finalist? Will someone let me know, or do I need to watch the WWA web site?**

**A:** Winners and their publishers will each receive a telephone call with the news, followed by official letters of notification that will provide details. Finalists, as well as their publishers, will receive official letters of notification.

**Q: Do you always give an award in every category?**

**A:** Western Writers of America reserves the right not to award a Spur in any given category if no entry merits such designation by majority rule of the judges.

**Q: My book was first published in England. Is it still eligible for your competition?**

**A:** We accept all works first published in accordance with our rules, regardless of country where published.

**Q: My book was self-published in 2005, and I didn't know about your competition at the time. Since I'm having it reprinted soon, can I simply change the copyright date so it'll be eligible this year?**

**A:** Reprints of previously published works are not made eligible by altering the copyright date for the purpose of complying with our rules.

## **GENERAL:**

**Q: May I ask the judges to let me know what they did or didn't like about my writing?**

**A:** Your entry is not the venue whereby to request critiques, reviews, or the names of agents from the judges or the Spur Chair.

**Q: I write book reviews for my local newspaper. Can I get the names and addresses of the entrants so I can ask for their books?**

**A:** Neither the Spur Chair nor the judges are at liberty to provide contact information of authors and/or publishers to those seeking review copies of published works.

**Q: Will you send my entry to the editor of the WWA's *Roundup* magazine so it can be reviewed?**

**A:** Works submitted for Spur Award competition are not forwarded to *Roundup* magazine for review purposes. For information regarding the review process, please contact *Roundup* editor Candy Moulton at [Candywwa@aol.com](mailto:Candywwa@aol.com).