

## **The Word Guild Canadian Christian Writing Awards 2008 (For Work Published in 2007)**

### **IMPORTANT CHANGE REGARDING ENTRY DEADLINES**

The Word Guild is very pleased that the number of entries more than doubled from the 2004 to 2007 contests. However, the increased volume has made it impossible to process all the entries within a short window in late January, and to give the judges adequate time to evaluate the entries.

In order to facilitate the processing of contest entries, the contest will now use a system of two rounds of entries, meaning there will be TWO entry deadlines. This procedure is similar to the entry schedules used by other writing awards.

**Round One deadline is October 31, 2007.** Entries for work that was published during the first nine months of the year (from January 01, 2007 to September 30, 2007) must be postmarked no later than October 31, 2007.

**Round Two deadline is January 15, 2008.** Entries for work that was published during the last three months of the year (from October 01, 2007 to December 31, 2007) must be postmarked no later than January 15, 2008. See Entry Fees and Deadlines section for further details.

If you have questions after reading this document, email admin [at] thewordguild [dot] com or leave a voice mail message at 905-294-6482.

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### **A. Introduction**

This awards program is designed to raise the profile of Canadian writers who are Christian, and to encourage them in the pursuit of excellence in the art, craft, practice and ministry of writing.

The awards are sponsored by The Word Guild, a national association of Canadian writers and editors who are Christian. Formerly known as The God Uses Ink Awards, these writing prizes have been awarded annually since 1988. Since The Word Guild assumed responsibility for the awards in 2002, the program has been revamped, renamed and expanded from six to 34 awards, encompassing 19 book categories and 15 article/short piece categories, including song lyrics and scripts or screenplays.

This contest is not restricted to members of The Word Guild. Either the writer or publisher may enter the work. Publishers are encouraged to enter work on the behalf of their writers, thereby raising the profile of their publications, and encouraging their regular writers to pursue excellence in their work.

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Entrants may enter the same item in more than one category. Although contest rules do not require an explicit statement of Christian belief in the work, judges will look for an underlying expression of the writer's Christian worldview informing and influencing the writing.

The judges' shortlist of the top entries in each category will be released in April 2008. The awards will be presented on June 11, 2008 at The Word Guild Canadian Christian Writing Awards Gala (location in Southern Ontario to be determined). Media releases announcing the winners will be sent after the awards presentation.

**B. Prizes**

Winners receive:

- a cash prize of \$200 for books or \$100 for other categories;
- a specially-designed gold lapel pin;
- certificates suitable for framing for the writer, the publisher and the award sponsor;
- on-stage recognition during the gala awards presentation;
- publicity through media releases;
- listing of the author, title and publisher of all winning books and articles in The Word Guild's full-colour publication *2008/2009 Readers' Guide to Books and Publications by Canadian Christians*, which is distributed to Canadian Christian bookstores, church libraries, Book Expo mainstream publishing trade show, Word on the Street festival, etc.

Additional feature for winning books:

- Book jacket stickers for Winner, Award of Merit and Finalist categories are available for purchase from The Word Guild. (These colourful stickers are undated, and feature ultra removable adhesive.)

Award of Merit recipients receive certificates suitable for framing for the writer and the publisher.

All entrants receive a copy of the judge's comments that will help them improve their work. Judge's comments will be mailed to the entrant after the awards have been presented.

**C. Eligibility**

1. The contest is open to original material published between January 1, 2007 and December 31, 2007.
2. The contest is open to writing by all Christians who affirm The Apostles' Creed (see Creed at end of document).
3. The contest is open to Canadian citizens (including Canadian citizens living abroad) and to non-Canadians living in Canada who have legal permanent resident status.
4. The contest is open to material published anywhere in the world, in secular or Christian media, including Internet-only publication, e-books and print-on-demand book publishing. Note that good quality hard copies must be submitted in order to enter the contest.
5. The contest is open to material in the English language.

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6. **Co-authorship:** A) Writers who collaborated and jointly authored a book or article (i.e., states authored by X and Y) may enter the contest. The work may be entered by one author; or jointly by both authors, if both entrants meet the eligibility requirements. B) If the book or article states it was authored by X with Y, then the lead author X must meet the eligibility requirements and must enter the work, either solely or jointly with the secondary author Y (if Y also meets the eligibility requirements). The secondary author Y may not enter the work as the sole entrant.
7. **Anthology Editors:** Anthologies or collections of the work of more than one author may be entered by the editor in the Special Book Category, or in another appropriate book category, if a) the editor's name is listed on the front cover, and b) the entrant developed the book's concept and directed and determined the book's content (i.e., played a more influential role than simply compiling the work of others). Preferably, the editor was a contributing writer to the anthology and wrote at least one chapter him/herself.  
**Anthology Contributing Writers:** If the entrant authored one section of a collection or anthology, the contributing writer should not enter the work in a book category. Enter that chapter in the appropriate article/short piece category. Submit photocopies of the relevant chapter, or submit the book and clearly indicate which chapter the judge should read.
8. **Reprints** or new editions of previously published work are allowed under specific conditions:
  - a) If the work previously was not entered in the contest at the time it originally was published, it may be entered in the contest for the year in which it was reprinted and re-released.
  - b) If the work has been significantly revised, expanded or updated before it is reprinted (i.e., minimum one-third new material), it may be re-entered in the contest for the year in which it was reprinted.
9. Members of the administrative committee of The Word Guild Canadian Christian Writing Awards, or their immediate family members, are not eligible to enter.
10. The Word Guild reserves the right to decline entries.

**D. Submission requirements**

1. Send the actual published book for all book entries. For short pieces, the tear sheets (i.e., original published pages) or a good-quality photocopy are acceptable. Work published exclusively on the Internet must be downloaded or printed from the publisher's site in a readable hardcopy format.
2. Entries will be evaluated by one expert judge. A complete entry consists of the appropriate fees plus TWO copies of the entered work and TWO copies of a completed entry form (one for the judge, plus one for administration).
3. You may enter the same item in more than one category. However, you must send all material including additional copies of the item, entry forms and fees for each category entered. There is a limit of EIGHT total entries per writer and a limit of FOUR items per writer entered in any one category.
4. If you enter the same work in more than one category, send the appropriate fees plus TWO copies of the completed entry form for each category you enter (one for the judge, plus one for administration) but only ONE additional copy of the entered work for the judge of each additional category. (I.e, if you are entering the same work in two categories, send three copies of the entered work; if you are entering the same work in three categories, send four copies of the entered work; and so on.)

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5. Choose your category carefully; entering your work in an inappropriate category can affect judges' marks. If unsure, refer to the definitions in this document. Please note that it is not feasible for this contest to offer categories that are appropriate for all published work. Please do not choose "special" simply because your book does not fit other categories. Most years, the Christian Living Book category is one of the largest and therefore one of the most competitive categories; if your book would fit into another category, consider if it may be advantageous to choose the other category.
6. Contest administrators cannot take responsibility for switching your entry to another category if you have checked an inappropriate category for your work.
7. Entered material will not be returned. The Word Guild is not responsible for the loss, damage, or return of any item submitted to the competition.
8. Entrants who want notification that their contest entry has been received and is complete may fill in an e-mail address on the appropriate line on the entry form, or else they may submit a stamped, self-addressed envelope or postcard with the entry.

**E. Entry Fees and Deadlines**

In order to facilitate the processing of contest entries, The Word Guild Writing Awards Contest has implemented a system of two rounds of entries, meaning there will be TWO entry deadlines.

**Round One:** Entries for work that was published during the first nine months of the year (from January 01, 2007 to September 30, 2007) must be postmarked no later than October 31, 2007.

**Round Two:** Entries for work that was published in the last three months of the year (from October 01, 2007 to December 31, 2007) must be postmarked no later than January 15, 2008.

**Late Fee:** Work that was published during the first nine months of the year, but is not submitted on time for the first entry deadline (postmarked no later than October 31, 2007) and instead is submitted in time for the second entry deadline (postmarked no later than January 15, 2008) will not be disqualified from the contest. However, the entrant must pay a higher entry fee before the entry will be processed.

**Exceptions:** If the work was published so late in the months of September (for Round One) or December (for Round Two) that the entrant did not receive a hard copy in time to postmark it by the deadline, please submit the completed entry form in time for the deadline and do not pay the late fee. Attach a cover letter explaining the circumstances. Forward the hard copies of the article or book separately, so that they are received no later than 14 days after the deadline.

**1. Entries submitted by Canadian residents, which meet the Round One and Round Two entry deadline requirements:**

- a. If author is a current member of The Word Guild: For books, entries must be accompanied by an entry fee of \$42.00 Cdn (\$40 Cdn plus \$2.00 GST). For all other categories, the entry fee is \$21.00 Cdn (\$20 Cdn plus \$1.00 GST). Make cheque payable to The Word Guild.
- b. If author is NOT a member of The Word Guild: For books, entries must be accompanied by an entry fee of \$52.50 Cdn (\$50 Cdn plus \$2.50 GST). For all other categories, the entry fee is \$26.25 Cdn (\$25 Cdn plus \$1.25 GST). Make cheque payable to The Word Guild.

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- 2. Entries submitted by non-residents of Canada, which meet the Round One and Round Two entry deadline requirements:**
  - a. If author is a current member of The Word Guild: For books, entries must be accompanied by an entry fee of \$40 US. For all other categories, the entry fee is \$20 US. Make cheque payable to The Word Guild.
  - b. If author is NOT a member of The Word Guild: For books, entries must be accompanied by an entry fee of \$50 US. For all other categories, the entry fee is \$25 US. Make cheque payable to The Word Guild.
  
- 3. LATE Entries submitted by Canadian residents, for work that was published during the first nine months of the year, but was NOT submitted on time for the Round One entry deadline and instead is submitted in time for the Round Two entry deadline:**
  - a. If author is a current member of The Word Guild: For books, entries must be accompanied by an entry fee of \$52.50 Cdn (\$50 Cdn plus \$2.50 GST). For all other categories, the entry fee is \$26.25 Cdn (\$25 Cdn plus \$1.25 GST). Make cheque payable to The Word Guild.
  - b. If author is NOT a member of The Word Guild: For books, entries must be accompanied by an entry fee of \$63.00 Cdn (\$60 Cdn plus \$3.00 GST). For all other categories, the entry fee is \$31.50 Cdn (\$30 Cdn plus \$1.50 GST). Make cheque payable to The Word Guild.
  
- 4. LATE Entries submitted by non-residents of Canada, for work that was published during the first nine months of the year, but was NOT submitted on time for the Round One entry deadline and instead is submitted in time for the Round Two entry deadline:**
  - a. If author is a current member of The Word Guild: For books, entries must be accompanied by an entry fee of \$50 US. For all other categories, the entry fee is \$25 US. Make cheque payable to The Word Guild.
  - b. If author is NOT a member of The Word Guild: For books, entries must be accompanied by an entry fee of \$60 US. For all other categories, the entry fee is \$30 US. Make cheque payable to The Word Guild.

**F. Mailing Instructions**

Send the entry package, including the cheque, by mail to:

The Word Guild Writing Awards  
Box 34  
Port Perry ON L9L 1A2

For courier deliveries, address the package to:  
The Word Guild Writing Awards  
Attn. Jane Twohey  
572 Fralicks Beach Road  
Port Perry, ON L9L 1B6

**G. Awards Categories – Books**

(For more detailed descriptions of categories, see definitions section)

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**Nonfiction Books**

1. Life Stories (biography, autobiography, memoir, family history, etc.)
2. Christian Living (personal growth, spirituality, inspirational, etc.)
3. Biblical Studies (devotional, discipleship, etc.)
4. Apologetics/Evangelism
5. Relationships (friendship, marriage, family, congregation, etc.)
6. Culture (contemporary social issues, missions, global affairs, etc.)
7. Leadership (theology, ethics, philosophy, history, doctrine, academic, theoretical, etc.)
8. Instructional (how-to, training, reference, etc.)
9. Special (book of poetry, anthology, gift book, etc.)
10. Independently Published Nonfiction (any genre of nonfiction book for which the author paid the full cost of publication)

**Novels**

1. Contemporary
2. Historical (includes Westerns)
3. Romance
4. Mystery/suspense
5. Futuristic
6. Independently Published Fiction (any genre of novel for which the author paid the full cost of publication)

**Other Book Categories**

1. General readership (any genre of novels or nonfiction books that explain or encourage faith for unchurched readers)
2. Children (fiction and nonfiction, including children's picture books)
3. Young Adult (fiction and nonfiction books)

**H. Awards Categories – Articles, short pieces and other**

(For more detailed descriptions of categories, see definitions section)

**Articles (Nonfiction):**

1. News
2. Long Feature – 1,000 words or more
3. Short Feature – under 1,000 words
4. Personal experience – first-person or as-told-to
5. Inspirational/devotional
6. Profile/human interest story
7. Review – book, movie, CD, concert, etc.
8. Column/editorial/first person essay – series (submit two consecutive; pay one entry fee)
9. Column/editorial/first person essay – single (submit one)

**Short Pieces and Other:**

1. General readership (any genre of articles or short stories that explain or encourage faith for unchurched readers)
2. Short story (fiction)
3. Children and young adult (articles or short stories)
4. Poetry (rhymed or free verse; maximum of 40 lines)
5. Song lyrics
6. Scripts and screenplays (minimum 10 minutes production time)

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**Note:**

1. Entries in the Articles, Short Pieces & Other categories may have been published or produced in a variety of secular or Christian media, including Internet-only publications, radio essays or commentaries, and chapters in compilation books or anthologies. Choose the appropriate genre regardless of where the item was published (for example, a personal experience story may have appeared in a newspaper, a magazine or an anthology book).
2. Organizers reserve the right to re-categorize entries. For example, if any one category receives a large number of entries, it may be subdivided and a prize may be offered in each division. Conversely, if any category does not receive what organizers deem to be a sufficient number of entries, it may be combined with another category.
3. Entries must meet pre-determined standards of quality in order to be shortlisted. If the judges deem none of the entries in a particular category meet the criteria, no award will be given and no entry fees will be refunded.

**I. Judging**

1. All qualified entries will be judged according to the following considerations:
  - a. excellence of writing
  - b. impact (the inspirational / informational value making it worthwhile)
  - c. fulfilment of stated purpose
  - d. suitability to target audience
  - e. originality/freshness of style
2. Each category will also be judged on technical and style qualities specific to that genre (e.g., characterization in fiction or outline and structure in nonfiction, amongst other qualities).
3. Although contest rules do not require an explicit statement of Christian belief, judges will look for an underlying expression of the writer's Christian worldview informing and influencing the writing.
4. How carefully you complete the entry form can impact your marks. The judges will assess how well your work met its stated purpose. Explain briefly but carefully your purpose/objective; target audience; how your underlying Christian worldview informs and influences the work. Be specific; for example, do not describe your target audience as "all Christians."
5. Judges' decisions are final. Although The Word Guild requests that judges approach their task with an objective attitude, there is an inevitable degree of subjectivity involved in judging writing. The Word Guild is not responsible for any comments or decisions made by any judge.
6. Comments made by the judges about the entered work are private, and are meant to help the entrant improve his or her writing. The judges' comments are not reviews and may not be used as endorsements of the work. As a condition of entering this contest, entrants must agree that they will not make the judges' comments public or quote from the judges' comments, including on web sites or book jackets, without first obtaining the express written permission of the judges.

**J. Information for Finalists on Judges' Shortlist**

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- For publicity and promotional purposes, all shortlisted candidates should be prepared to send a good-quality (preferably professional) head and shoulders photograph if requested.
- For publicity purposes, finalists should be prepared to send the news release announcing the shortlist of finalists to local or denominational publications and media outlets that would potentially publish news about the finalist's inclusion in the awards. Instructions will be sent to all finalists about how to adapt the news release and add personal information to create local news interest.
- Finalists are invited to attend the Gala awards presentation. Winners who are present will be asked to accept their award on stage from the award sponsor; winners who are unable to attend should designate someone to accept on their behalf.

**K. The Apostles' Creed.**

Contest eligibility requires that the writer affirms The Apostles' Creed.

**The Apostles' Creed**

I believe in God, the Father Almighty,  
the Creator of heaven and earth,  
and in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord:  
Who was conceived of the Holy Spirit,  
born of the Virgin Mary,  
suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
was crucified, died, and was buried.  
The third day he rose again from the dead.  
He ascended into heaven,  
and sits at the right hand of God the Father.  
He will come again to judge the living and the dead.  
I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic\* church,  
the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins,  
the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting.  
Amen.

\* the whole or universal church - not any one denomination

**L. Definitions of Some Categories**

**Books**

**Apologetics/Evangelism:** books entered in this category may have a target reader market of either Christian believers or non-believers. In contrast, books entered in the General Readership category must have non-believing readers as the primary target market. If the book qualifies, the author may choose to enter the same item in more than one category.

**Biblical Studies** (devotional, discipleship, etc.): books entered in this category generally have a target market of lay readers; more complex expounding of theology, doctrine, etc. aimed at clergy or scholars may be entered in the Leadership category

**Culture** (social issues, missions, global affairs, etc.): writing about social issues including justice, poverty, the environment, human rights, etc.; Christianity's role in contemporary culture, etc.

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**General readership** (explains or encourages faith for unchurched readers): any genre of novels or nonfiction books written primarily for a general, mainstream or unchurched readership; written from a Christian worldview; may attempt to move non-believers toward faith; not necessary to be overtly evangelistic.

**Independently Published:** authors have paid the full cost of publication. Note that entrants may enter the same item in more than one category. Authors of independently published books have the option of entering their work in the independently published category, in the appropriate other book category, or in both.

**Leadership** (theology, ethics, philosophy, history, doctrine, academic, theoretical, etc.): books entered in this category generally have more complex content, references and terminology than usually contained in books aimed at lay readers; the target market may include scholars, clergy, Christian leaders, etc.

### **Articles, Short Pieces & Other**

**News:** informs about something significant, interesting, new; covers who, what, when, where, why, how of an event or reaction to an event, issue or trend. Writer evidences neutrality, balance, evenness of tone.

**Long Feature:** in-depth treatment of a trend, situation or group of ideas in 1,000 words or more; explicitly aims to do more than inform (e.g. analyze, contextualize, equip, etc.). Research provides a variety of sources, quotations and references; writer does not include his/her own thoughts or opinion on issue. Writer evidences neutrality, balance, evenness of tone. Usually written in third-person.

**Short Feature:** informs reader about a trend, situation or group of ideas in under 1,000 words. Less rigorous judging criteria than for long feature, but writer should provide some variety of sources and references. Usually written in third-person.

**Profiles/human interest:** stories about people; includes obituaries; aims to inform and usually also to inspire

**Column/editorial/first person essay:** opinion or persuasive writing; commentary on a timely subject; writer explains, interprets and appraises an event or issue; editorials, usually unsigned, outline policies and beliefs of a publication; columns represent writer's personal viewpoint. Choose one of two categories to enter: regular column (submit two consecutive) or occasional column (submit one).

**Column-series (submit two consecutive):** author appeared on a regular schedule in a publication in a series of a minimum of five pieces; submit two pieces that were published in a row; pay one entry fee

**Column-single (submit one):** author appeared occasionally in a publication or one-time in a "guest" column; submit one piece

**General readership** (any genre of articles or short stories that explain or encourage faith for unchurched readers): published in the mainstream press, not in the church press; written primarily for a general, mainstream or unchurched readership; written from a Christian worldview; may attempt to move non-believers toward faith; not necessary to be overtly evangelistic

**Scripts and screenplays:** an original play, musical with dialogue or screenplay, released to the public in the current calendar year through being produced or published. Minimum of 10 minutes production time.

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- (A) **Play** must have had public performance, either live or taped/filmed for broadcast, or been published. If live theatre performance, provide proof of performance: list venue, date, approximate number in audience, name and phone number of contact person. Include copy of printed program/church bulletin if available, and use highlighter to identify the performance. If broadcast, provide details of when and where. Supply two copies of script. If published, supply two copies in final published format.
- (B) **Screenplay** must have been produced and available for viewing by the public through either public showing, broadcast or sales. Supply two copies of screenplay. Provide two copies of production on DVD or video cassette, with no other material on the recording. Entry materials will not be returned.

**Song lyrics:** an original song released to the public in the current calendar year through either A or B below.

- (A) **Public performance, including broadcast, concert, church or worship settings.** Provide proof of performance: list venue, date, approximate number in audience, name and phone number of contact person. Include copy of printed program/church bulletin if available, and use highlighter to identify your performance. Supply two copies of typed lyric sheet with complete credits for lyrics and music. Supply two copies of a demo quality CD or audio cassette of the song being performed. Include only one song per demo CD or audio cassette, with no other material on the recording. Ensure that the lyrics are clearly audible for judging. You may enter more than one song, but each song must be submitted separately. Entry materials will not be returned.
- (B) **Recording available for sale to the public.** Supply two copies of typed lyric sheet with complete credits for lyrics and music. Supply two copies of the recording. Clearly identify the song title and track number. Ensure that the lyrics are clearly audible for judging. You may enter more than one song, but each song must be submitted separately. See Submission Requirements for instructions about number of copies of CD to submit for multiple entries. Entry materials will not be returned.

Note: This contest category is for song lyrics only. The author of the song lyrics must be the entrant in this contest, and must meet the eligibility requirements of being a Canadian citizen or permanent resident and of affirming The Apostles' Creed. In cases where the melody was written by a different person, the music composer is not an entrant in this contest.