**Guidelines for the 2024** **Golden Nib Contest**

**NOTE: FAILURE TO FOLLOW THE SUBMISSION GUIDELINES WILL DISQUALIFY ENTRIES FROM CONSIDERATION FOR STATE AWARDS. ENTRIES NOT ADHERING TO STATED GUIDELINES, INCLUDING THE LACK OF AN AUTHOR BIO ON THE COVERSHEET, WILL BE RETURNED FOR CORRECTION IF TIME ALLOWS. IT IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE CHAPTER GOLDEN NIB COORDINATOR TO ENSURE ENTRIES FOLLOW THESE SIMPLE GUIDELINES.**

The 2024 Golden Nib writing contest is officially open. The Golden Nib, started in 2005, is The Virginia Writers Club (VWC) annual writing competition in three categories: Fiction, Nonfiction, and Poetry, with cash prizes for first, second, and third place finishers at the state level. The contest is run in two tiers: local Chapter (first tier) and State level (second tier). Each Chapter forwards its first-place winning entries for judging at the (second tier) State VWC level.

Contestants **must** be a current member of The Virginia Writers Club, not just a chapter of the organization. **Entrants who live within the jurisdiction of a VWC chapter** **should enter the first tier of the competition through that chapter. No chapter can set a due date that falls before July 10.**

**VWC members living in an area where no chapter exists** **can submit their entries to Chuck Tabb, the current president of VWC, at** [**ctabb919@gmail.com**](mailto:ctabb919@gmail.com)**. These entries must include a mailing address so it can be verified that the author is not a member of a chapter. These entries will be forwarded to a chapter for inclusion in their judging. Entrants not a member of a chapter must submit their entries to Chuck Tabb no later than June 30 to allow them to be forwarded to a chapter for judging.**

All other entries are to be submitted to the author’s local chapter. Each chapter submits one representative in each category to the state finals, where first, second, and third place winners in each category are announced at the annual meeting held in November.

All 1st place chapter winning manuscripts submitted to the state finals will be published in the VWC Golden Nib and Teen Nib Journal, which will be released in early 2025. Second and third place chapter winners may request their manuscripts be considered for the VWC journal through their cover sheet.

**CONTEST RULES/GUIDELINES**  
Entries will be accepted on any subject the author or poet chooses in the categories of fiction, nonfiction and poetry.

·         Manuscripts must be the original, unpublished work of the entrant, and must not have won a prize at any level in any other competition. The VWC State competition allows entries published in your personal blogs. Works published in blogs other than your own, on social network sites, or in an online publication are ineligible and should not be submitted.

·         Entries written by Artificial Intelligence (AI) are NOT permitted! **Each entrant MUST include a statement at the end of each submission stating the entry did not use AI to compose the entry. Consider that AI does not have an issue with plagiarism!**

·         Entrants may submit only one entry per category of fiction, nonfiction, and poetry.

·         Fiction and nonfiction entries should conform to the Chicago Manual of Style.

·         Fiction and nonfiction entries must be no longer than 3,500 words, including any notes, bibliographies, or other supporting text. Poetry entries must be no longer than 50 lines. Please be aware that poetry that has excessively long lines may be reformatted without changing any words to fit onto the pages of the Journal. Submitting your entries implies acceptance of this possible reformatting. Reformatting in this case means a single line might be broken into two lines of type with no capital letter starting the second line of type, with an indention of the second line indicating the two lines are part of one line of the poem. An example follows:

Once upon a midnight dreary, while I pondered,

                                 weak and weary.

**This would only occur when necessary** to allow formatting the poem from an 8½ x 11 page to a 6 x 9 page for the book’s trim.

FORMATTING THE ENTRY

-   A fillable coversheet is available at this link: [**coversheet**](https://www.virginiawritersclub.org/resources/Documents/GN%20Cover%20Sheet%202024.docx). The coversheet must be filled out in its entirety, **including a mailing address, email address, and an author bio of no more than 200 words**. This coversheet must be submitted with **each entry**.

-   Submissions can be in doc, docx or rtf format.

-   All pages must show contest category, word count (or line count for Poetry), and page number **in the header**.

-   The first line of the text should be the title of the work.

-   If the author’s name or any identifying information appears on any page of the manuscript, the entry will be disqualified.

-   Manuscripts must be in 12 point Times New Roman font. Page settings must be 8 ½ by 11-inch with one inch margins. Other fonts and sizes will result in disqualification of the entry.

-   Fiction and nonfiction manuscripts must be double-spaced, with a ragged right margin (not a justified, straight right margin).

-   Poetry manuscripts must be single-spaced.

·         All submissions not in accordance with format and other rules will be disqualified.

·         No paper submissions will be accepted. All manuscripts and coversheets must be electronic.

·         A list of Golden Nib winners in each category will be published on the VWC Web site after the Annual Meeting, which takes place the first Saturday in November each year. All finalists will be published in the 2025 edition of the VWC Golden Nib and Teen Nib Journal. All rights remain the property of the author.

**SUBMIT ENTRIES TO YOUR** [**VWC CHAPTER**](https://virginiawritersclub.org/chapters)**BY ITS SPECIFIED DEADLINE**

Each chapter has its own guidelines, deadline, and requirements for entering. All chapters must adhere to the state contest rules as presented in this document.

·         **No ties allowed**

·         The entrant must be a VWC member. If the winner at the chapter-level is not a member of the VWC, the author must join VWC before the entry is forwarded to the state level competition. Please note that membership in a chapter does not include membership in VWC.

·         Contact your local VWC chapter to find out what the deadline is for chapter contest submissions! Again, chapter deadlines cannot occur before July 10.

·         **Except for VWC unaffiliated members, entries sent by authors directly to the State Level coordinator or the VWC President will not be accepted.**

·         **The deadline to submit all first, second, and third place entries to the state-level coordinator is September 1, 2024. The name and email address of the state-level coordinator will be forwarded to the chapter-level coordinators by July 10.**

·         It is the responsibility of each chapter to share the information of where to submit entries for local judging with their members. Each chapter should supply Chuck Tabb at [**ctabb919@gmail.com**](mailto:ctabb919@gmail.com) the name and email address of the coordinator of The Golden Nib for their chapter.

·         Coordinators will be contacted as to where to email the entries prior to July 10.

**STATE VWC AWARDS:**

Only first-place winners from the chapters will be eligible for the state contest. Winners of the VWC Golden Nib Contest will be announced, and awards presented, at the VWC Annual Meeting and Awards Ceremony in November. Awards for each category: First Place-$100; Second Place-$50; Third Place-$25.