



MINNESOTA GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY

2024 Family History Writing Competition Entry Rules and Guidelines

Do you have a story to tell?
Have you found a solution to a family mystery?
Enter the MGS Family History Writing Competition!

The winner of the Family History Writing Competition will be awarded a certificate at the Minnesota Genealogical Society North Star Genealogy Conference, and be invited to submit the entry for publication in the Minnesota Genealogical Society (MGS) quarterly journal, *Generations*, formerly *Minnesota Genealogist*.

GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

- Topics must pertain to individuals or families who settled in or passed through the American Midwest, including Minnesota and surrounding states and provinces.
- Authors need not be members of the Minnesota Genealogical Society.
- Judges and judges' immediate family members may not participate.
- Fiction will not be accepted. If the entry is based on family lore, describe the source of the story and how it was passed forward, and indicate efforts made to authenticate the story.
- An entry must not have been previously published; see the FAQ for information.
- An author may submit only one entry.
- Winner will be expected to grant permission for publication in the MGS quarterly journal. Winning articles are subject to editing; the edited version is published only after review by the author.

JUDGING

All entries are judged on:

- readability and quality of writing: grammar, spelling, and punctuation
- choice of a compelling or engaging topic
- suitability for publication in the MGS quarterly journal; see the FAQ for suggestions
- inclusion of historical, geographic, and cultural context
- clarity of exposition and presentation
- if appropriate for the topic,
 - adequacy of research and analysis to demonstrate a genealogical conclusion
 - accuracy and consistency of source citations for statements of fact not considered general knowledge

Judging process:

- An anonymous panel of judges will select winning entries
- Judges will not know the identity of authors
- Judges may designate entries for honorable mention and recommend publication
- MGS reserves the right to decline naming a winner if no entry meets judging criteria
- Judges will contribute helpful comments to authors

FORMAT

- Entries must be readable by Microsoft Word, in 12-point Times or Times New Roman font, in single-column layout with 1-inch margins.
- Entries may not exceed 4,000 words, excluding footnotes.
- Number the pages and include the article's title on each page.
- Place source citations in footnotes. Create the footnotes:
 - using your software's automatic footnote feature. In Microsoft Word, use References (PC) or the Insert (Mac) feature. Manually-created footnotes are not accepted.
 - with Arabic numerals. Roman numerals are not accepted.
 - with consistent citation styles. See examples of preferred styles in Thomas W. Jones, *Mastering Genealogical Documentation*.
- Do not include photos or graphics within the Word file. Indicate on the cover sheet if photos are available.
- Tables supporting a conclusion are welcomed. Number the tables and place them immediately after all text. Within the text, refer to tables by number, e.g., "Table 1."
- If a subject of the entry has the same surname as the author, replace it with "*Lastname.*"
- Include a cover sheet containing:
 - author's name,
 - mailing address,
 - phone number,
 - email address,
 - entry title,
 - where you heard about the contest, and
 - availability of images or photos.

SUBMISSION

- Each entry has two files: 1) a cover sheet, and 2) narrative text.
- Email the entry, no later than **1 July 2024**, to: writingcontest@mngs.org
- The winning entrant(s) will be notified on or before 1 September 2024.

PUBLICATION

- The author retains copyright to the entry, but grants permission to the Minnesota Genealogical Society to publish the entry in the MGS quarterly journal or other publications until 31 July 2025. Before that date, entries may not be published or reprinted elsewhere without the joint permission of MGS and the author.
- *Entries selected for publication will be subject to editing.* The editors of the MGS quarterly journal work with the authors to achieve the best possible presentation of the work, and reserve the right to edit winning entries for space or other considerations. No changes will be made without the permission of the author, but MGS reserves the right to withhold publication of an article if the author does not consent to the editorial process.

Questions? Contact: writingcontest@mngs.org

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