



## Oregon Poetry Association Contest FAQ

---

1. **Who can enter this contest?**
  - a. Anyone may enter except current Board Members and the Contest Chair.
2. **What is considered a published poem?**
  - a. Any poem that has appeared in print or on-line, including blogs.
  - b. If you are unsure whether or not your poem has been published, please contact the contest chair (see [number 28](#) below).
3. **I entered a contest and won an honorable mention, but the poem was not published, can I resubmit it?**
  - a. Yes, as long as it wasn't published.
4. **I'm not sure what category my poem belongs in; if I send it to you without a category will you put it in the appropriate category?**
  - a. No, your poem will be disqualified.
  - b. If you have questions about the categories feel free to contact the contest chair.
5. **If I enter the same poem to multiple categories, will you pick the category it belongs in?**
  - a. No, your poem will be disqualified from all the categories.
  - b. If you have questions about the categories feel free to contact the contest chair.
6. **What you mean by Free Verse and Traditional Verse?**
  - a. **Free verse** is a term describing various styles of poetry that are written without using a strict pattern of rhyming. It does not have regular meter, rhyme, fixed line length, or a specific stanza pattern.
  - b. **Traditional Verse** utilizes a formal metrical structure and a formal rhyme scheme, such as a sonnet, an ode, a villanelle, etc.
7. **Does the Theme: Indecision means writing a poem about indecision?**
  - a. Themes may be entered as either literal or metaphorical
8. **Regarding the statement that submitters are asked to sign in the New Poets Category:**

**“I have never won a cash prize for a poem.”**

**Does this rule apply only to those poems being submitted to your contest or does the rule apply to the poet?**

For example, let's say that I am submitting three poems (“A”, “B”, and “C”) to your contest and none of these poems have won a cash prize. Does the fact that one of my earlier poems (“X”) *did* win a cash prize make me ineligible for this contest? Put another way, do you only want work from poets who have never won a prize?

- a. Yes, it means poets entering poems in this category should not have won a cash prize in any contest for any poem, not just this contest, not just the poems submitted.
  - b. You are free, however, to submit poems to the other categories, as long as they have never been published.
9. **What's a simultaneous submission?**
    - a. A simultaneous submission is when your poem is submitted to more than one place including other contests, print or on-line journals, blogs, and/or websites.
      - i. If you are unsure whether or not your poem has been published, please contact the contest chair (see [number 28](#) below).

10. **What happens if my poem is accepted somewhere else?**
  - a. Congratulations!
  - b. You must immediately withdraw your poem from the contest:
    - i. send an email to Colette Tennant CTennant@corban.edu **OR**
    - ii. send a letter to:  
Colette Tennant  
2885 Grayhawk Ct. NW  
Salem, OR 97304
  - c. Your entry fee will not be refunded.
  - d. Your submission will not be eligible for any prizes. If this happens after the judges have picked the winners, the next person will move up in position.
11. **What's up with all the rules about fonts, ink, and margins?**
  - a. This contest is judged blindly so all the entries should appear the same so as not to prejudice your entry.
    - i. Small, non-standard, colored fonts are hard to read.
    - ii. Larger fonts waste paper and are also hard to read.
      1. 80 lines should fit on 2 pages (unless there is a lot of white space).
  - b. Judges and the contest chair write in the margins.
    - i. (It's important to have an all around 1-1/2 inch blank margin and not stamp your address in the corners).
12. **Should I include white space/blank lines in the line count?**
  - a. No, only count lines with words on them.
  - b. If your poem has one word on one line, it still counts as a line.
13. **Should I count the title in the line count?**
  - a. The title does not count as a line, nor does an **epigraph**.
    - i. An epigraph is a phrase, quotation, or poem that is set at the beginning of a poem.
14. **Why do I need to send two copies of my poem(s)?**
  - a. Poems are tracked by individual contest numbers which are entered in the upper right hand corner of your submission.
  - b. The copy with your contact information is:
    - i. Numbered.
    - ii. Information is entered into a spread sheet (by the contest number).
    - iii. Lines are counted.
    - iv. Poems are stored numerically by the contest number.
  - c. The copy without your contact information is
    - i. Numbered.
    - ii. Poems are stored first by category entered, then by contest number.
    - iii. This copy goes to the judge after the close of the deadline.
15. **Postmarked Deadline, what does that mean?**
  - a. Your submission may be mailed up to and including the posted date of the deadline, i.e. March 1, 2012, as long as the post office cancels it on or before March 1.
    - i. It may take up to a week for the post office to deliver entries to the contest chair.
      1. The contest chair diligently checks the canceled date on the entries.
16. **How are the judges picked?**
  - a. The contest chair selects judges based on the criteria from the Board of Directors.
  - b. Typically two years must pass before a judge is allowed to judge another Contest.

17. **When will you announce the contest judges?**
  - a. We will announce the contest judges on the website as they are selected.
18. **Should I submit if I know the judge?**
  - a. If you have been a student of or been in a poetry workshop with a category judge, you should not submit to that category. We will ask judges to disqualify any poem that they recognize.
19. **What happens if a judge recognizes my poem?**
  - a. The judge will disqualify the poem and notify the contest chair.
  - b. The contest chair will notify the poet and issue a refund of the poet's entry fee.
20. **Can I change my submission after I have entered it?**
  - a. No, all entries are final.
21. **How will I know who wins?**
  - a. All winners will be notified prior to the conference.
  - b. To receive a list of winners, enclose a #10 self-addressed, stamped envelope (SASE) with your submission or provide an e-mail address for notification.
22. **What happens if my poem wins?**
  - a. Congratulations!
  - b. All winners will be notified prior to the conference.
  - c. For all place poems (1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, and 4<sup>th</sup>) the OPA has first publication rights:
    - i. Your poem will appear in the OPA's yearly anthology, *Verseweavers*.
      1. All rights revert to author.
    - ii. You will receive your cash prize and certificate either at the annual conference or it will be mailed to you.
    - iii. If you are attending the annual conference you will be asked to read your poem.
      1. If you are not able to attend the conference all first place poems will be read.
  - d. For all honorable mention poems (HM 1<sup>st</sup>, HM 2<sup>nd</sup>, HM 3<sup>rd</sup>, HM 4<sup>th</sup>, and HM 5<sup>th</sup>):
    - i. Your poem will NOT appear in the OPA's yearly anthology, *Verseweavers*, though your name will appear as having won an Honorable Mention.
    - ii. You will receive your certificate either at the annual conference or it will be mailed to you.
      1. You will not be asked to read your poem at the conference.
    - iii. You may resubmit the poem for another contest, as long as it remains unpublished.
23. **What are first rights?**
  - a. The OPA obtains first North American serial rights. This means that the work being published has never been published elsewhere, that you give us permission to publish it in print, and that all rights to your work will revert back to you, the author, upon publication of our annual anthology, *Verseweavers*.
24. **I changed my poem after I submitted it to the contest and an earlier version won; will you print the newer version?**
  - a. No, your poem will be printed in *Verseweavers* in the version that won the contest.
  - b. We *may* allow for a change due to a typographical error.

25. **I sent a request for a copy of the rules and never received it, what's up with that?**
  - a. You **must** send your request with a #10 business envelope **SASE** (self addressed, stamped envelope).
26. **Should I include a check in with my submission or should I mail it separately?**
  - a. You should enclose a check for your submission with your submission.
27. **If I am joining/renewing my membership at the same time I am sending in my submission can I send it all together?**
  - a. No contest submissions should be mailed to the Contest Chair and membership/renewals should mailed separately.
    - i. check the website for the most up-to-date membership information.
28. **What if I have a question that isn't answered in this FAQ?**
  - a. Contact the contest chair:
    - i. send an email to CTennant@corban.edu **OR**
    - ii. send a letter to:  
Colette Tennant  
2885 Grayhawk Ct. NW  
Salem, OR 97304