

BCGS Family History Writing Contest

CONTEST TIME PERIOD CATEGORIES:

Colonial 1607-1783	\$500
Post-Revolutionary 1784 -1839	\$400
Moving Westward 1840- 1865	\$300
Coming of Age 1866- 1919	\$200
Dawn of a New Age 1920 – 1980	\$100

AGE CATEGORIES

- Ages 12- 14
- Ages 15-18

Deadline for submissions is November 1st, annually. Winner is awarded and/or recognized at the annual Bosque County Genealogical Society Business Meeting

Winning Prize

- The person who compiles the most outstanding family history based on a direct ancestor in the chosen Time Period category above will receive the amount designated for that time period. One winning prize will be awarded for each of the two age categories.
- Winners' stories will be published in the *Bosque County Genealogical Society Journal* and placed in BCGS Archives Library.

Contest Criteria

- The Family History Writing Contest is open to Bosque County youth ages 12-18. Children and grandchildren of BCGS members in good standing outside of Bosque County are eligible but must provide proof of relationship with their entry. Entrants can only enter one contest per year. Entrants can enter contests every year until reaching the age of 18. Contest winners are not eligible to re-enter the winning Time Period Category, but must enter a different category with a different ancestor. Entrants can begin the application process at any time during the year they wish, but must submit their entry no later than November 1st of every year. Entries submitted after that date will be held over for the following year. Submissions cannot be re-entered or withdrawn once submission is made. Submissions must be made according to requirements listed below to bosquegenealogy@gmail.com.

Requirements

- Ancestor subject of contestant must be a direct ancestor who is deceased.**
- Manuscript Length:** Ages 12-14 between 1,000 – 4,000 words. Ages 15-18 between 4,000 and 10,000 words
- Family Tree Chart Number of Generations: Ages 12-14:** Generations 1 and 2. Ancestor subject and spouse will be placed on lines 2 and 3, their child on line 1 on the Ancestry Chart provided in the contestant packet. **Ages 15-18:** Generation 1 thru 3. Ancestor Subject and spouse will be placed on lines 2 and 3, their child on line 1, the parents of the chosen ancestor on the 3rd generation. To be submitted with entry.
- Research Log** – Both age categories must fill out and include at least one trip to an archive (museum or other), public library, or courthouse on the Research Log provided in contestant packet. To be submitted with entry.

- **Family Group Sheet – Age Group 15-18** only will be required to fill out the Family Group Sheet provided in the contestant packet of their ancestor subject. To be submitted with entry.
- **Time Line – Both age categories** must fill out the Time Line provided in contestant packet for the chosen ancestor. Events of your ancestor must be listed in chronological order beginning with his birth and ending with his death and burial. To be submitted with essay.
- **Images – Age group 12-14** must submit a minimum of 3 images with their stories; **Age Group 15-18** must submit a minimum of 6. Images can be photos of people, legal documents, census records, newspapers items, maps, historical illustrations, charts etc.
- **Originality:** Not previously published and not submitted elsewhere for publication and completed in full by contestant.
- **Documentation:** Individual, specific citations (footnote form) for every statement of fact that is not public knowledge
- **Appearance:** 12-point type, 1” margins,

MANUSCRIPT LENGTH

The manuscript word count for each age category will include the title, text, and footnotes. Illustrations, maps, and photographs essential to the story must be used, but any captions should be included in the word count.

ORIGINALITY

A family history story should not be entered in this contest if it has been submitted or will be submitted for publication before the contest ends. Plagiarism will be grounds for disqualification. Direct quotes from other published works are permitted as long as they italicized in quotation marks and the source is included in the footnotes.

DOCUMENTATION - Any fact stated that is not common knowledge must be documented (sourced).

SOURCES

Original Source: the person or record whose information did not come from data already spoken or written. The original is the most authoritative source. Often, however, it no longer survives or its preservation dictates that it be examined only as an image copy (microfilm, digitized image, and so on).

Derivative Source: a person or record supplying information that is repeated, reproduced, transcribed, abstracted, or summarized from something already spoken or written. Because every repetition or recopying of data is an opportunity for error, the closer the derivative is to the original the more reliable the data are likely to be.

- **Recommended Sources Categories:**
 - Vital Records – Birth, Marriage, Death, Church Records, Bibles
 - Census, Voting, Tax records
 - Will, Probate, Cemetery records
 - Newspapers
 - Land Records
 - Court Records
 - Regional Biographical and Historical Books

APPEARANCE

The manuscript should be typed in a Word Document. Use 12-point font size. The title of the Family History Story must appear on the first page. Notes and references should appear as footnotes at the bottom of the page to which they apply.

SUBMISSION

1. Do not put your name on any pages of your entry. Your name, phone number, email address, date of birth, chosen Time Period Category Contest, along with the title of your entry, go on a cover page.
2. All contest entries must be printed in 12-point type and double-spaced as a WORD document.
3. Use one-inch margins all around.
4. Entries must be typed according to appropriate, professional form.
5. Entries must be in good taste, easy to read, use proper grammar and punctuation, and correct spelling.
6. Do not use fancy or script fonts for your text, except when stating character thoughts or quotes, which must be in italics.
7. Any deviation from these rules could be the basis for disqualification.
8. Submit the entry in a Word document with the cover page and scanned images of required forms as directed under the “Requirements” instructions for each age group.
9. Review the guidelines one final time before submitting. No re-submissions will be accepted. Submissions should be made to bosquegenealogy@gmail.com

EVALUATION

Essays are judged for historical accuracy, adherence to topic, organization of materials, interest, originality, spelling, grammar, punctuation and neatness. The criteria for excellence in a paper rely heavily on how you demonstrate your research skills. Tell a story, place your ancestor and his/her family in historical context, and make sure the historical aspect is relevant to your ancestor.

RESULTS

Please be sure you follow all requirements related to your application. Failure to comply with any of the requirements listed may result in disqualification during the review process and/or make your application ineligible for an award. Though contestants are encouraged to seek assistance where needed, it is expected that contestants will do their own research and story development and submission preparations.

PROCEDURAL RECOMMENDATION

Research and development of your ancestor’s family history should follow three general steps: Gather Information (Log Sheet); Organize (Time Line and Family Charts); Story Development. In the contestant packet is a list of Website Recommendations that will help you get started on your genealogical research journey. It is recommended that you visit those websites. The first two items on that list are YouTube videos that will give you tips to help you get started with the three steps mentioned above.

Though most of your research can take place online, one of the requirements mandate at least one trip to a library, courthouse, or archives to be recorded on your log sheet; but certainly, more are permitted and indeed recommended. Many times, Family Search Affiliated libraries will have access to online documents and records that cannot be found anywhere else. Be sure to locate one near you from the FamilySearch website (link included on your website list). Nellie Pederson Civic Library in Clifton, TX is such a library. Many times, you can schedule a visit to those libraries where there will be an assistant to help you in your research. Archives consist of local historical and genealogical societies as well as museums. Upon entry, each contestant will be

emailed a pdf file of an issue of the *Bosque County Genealogical Journal*. It is recommended that you read it in its entirety as you will find examples of biographical sketches submitted by BCGS members as well as research tips and recommendations.

If you are unable to complete your story and have it submitted by the November 1st deadline, you can save what you have gathered and make the submission the following year or save it for posterity.