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University of Dayton

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NEWS



Wednesday January 13, 2016

You Can Write!

Capture the spirit of Erma Bombeck in your writing and win cash and a free registration to this spring's sold-out Erma Bombeck Writers' Workshop.

Writers around the world are encouraged to capture the spirit of famed Dayton writer Erma Bombeck by submitting an online entry in the Erma Bombeck Writing Competition, sponsored by Washington-Centerville Public Library in conjunction with the University of Dayton. The contest runs through 8 a.m. (EST), Monday, Feb. 15.

The competition, held every two years, pays tribute to hometown writer Erma Bombeck, one of the greatest humorists of the 20th century and arguably the University of Dayton's most famous graduate.

Entries should be 450 words or fewer. Essays submitted may not have been previously published (either print or online).

One Dayton, Ohio-area winner and one global winner will be awarded a \$500 prize in each of two categories — humor and human interest — for a total of four prizes. These winners also will receive a free registration (\$425 value) to the sold-out March 31-April 2 Erma Bombeck Writers' Workshop at the University of Dayton.

One entry per person will be accepted. All winning essays will be published on the library's website, as well as in the *Dayton Daily News* and in the workshop's printed program. Those receiving honorable mentions will receive certificates.

The entries will be blind judged by a panel of authors, syndicated columnists and experienced writers. Winners will be announced in mid-March with a celebration event set for 7 p.m., Wednesday, March 30, at the Centerville Library featuring Gina Barreca, author, humorist, syndicated columnist and professor of English literature and feminist theory at the University of Connecticut. The awards ceremony is free and open to the public.

"Although it may have seemed effortless, Erma worked very hard as a writer," said Debe Dockins, Erma Bombeck Writing Competition coordinator. "She practiced every day, and she just got better and better. She stuck to her tried-and-true formula: 'Hook 'em with the lead, hold 'em with laughter. Exit with a quip they won't forget!' And that's exactly the essence we ask entrants to the Erma Bombeck Writing competition to capture in their essays."

In 2014, 853 writers from 48 states and 13 countries entered the contest, spilling out roughly 382,500 words. Nancy Cartwright — the voice of Bart Simpson — and a slate of accomplished writers from around the country and Canada judged the entries.

Previous contest winners are encouraged to apply. The contest is not open to children under 13, Washington-Centerville Public Library employees and board members, contest judges and their families, and Erma Bombeck Writers' Workshop faculty and speakers for the current year.

For complete writing competition guidelines, an online entry form or more information, click on the related link to the right or visit <http://www.wclibrary.info/erma/index.asp>.

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