

Kansas Authors Club Annual Book Awards

— Published Book Awards • Eight Categories • Cash Awards —

For the 2026 Award Year

Eligible Books: published January 1 – December 31, 2025

Submissions Accepted: November 1, 2025 – March 1, 2026

- Beginning in 2025, we will added an announcement of three finalists per contest category prior to the announcement of the winner at our fall gathering in October. Note that the new eligibility window will be for books with a 1st publication date in the previous year only.
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BOOK AWARDS GUIDELINES

- These contests are open to any Kansas Authors Club member.
- No entry fee is required.
- If it is the decision of the judge that none of the entries within a category merit acknowledgment, no prize will be awarded.

CATEGORY CRITERIA FOR PUBLISHED BOOKS OF PROSE

- **J. Donald & Bertha Coffin Memorial Book Award for Fiction (Coffin Fiction Award):** The entry must be a minimum of 50 pages in length. This category includes titles written for an audience of young adult (YA) or adult readers. Cash prize: \$100.
- **J. Donald & Bertha Coffin Memorial Book Award for Nonfiction (Coffin Nonfiction Award):** The entry must be a minimum of 50 pages in length. Eligible entries might include memoir, travel writing, philosophy, biography, business, journalism, science, hobby, self-help, parenting, or true crime. Books qualifying for the Martin Kansas History Award are NOT eligible for this award. Cash prize: \$100.
- **Martin Kansas History Book Award:** The entry must be a minimum of 50 pages in length. The subject of the book must be Kansas History. This may be a history of the state, a county, a city, church, school, institution, an individual, a way of life, or any FACTUAL account of any phase of Kansas history. No fiction. Not a genealogy.

Books entered in this category may NOT also be entered for the Coffin Nonfiction Award. Cash prize: \$100.

- **“It Looks Like a Million” Book Design Award (for prose and poetry):** The entry must be a minimum of 50 pages in length. This contest is for books by independent authors, which includes self-published and small press/indie press authors. For example, the author of the book must be the primary decision maker for production, including design and layout, of the book. Authors may have hired editors, layout designers, etc. Cash prize: \$100.

CATEGORY CRITERIA FOR PUBLISHED BOOKS OF POETRY

- **Nelson Poetry Book Award:** The entry must be a minimum of 50 pages in length. This award is intended for a Kansas poet. Books including prose selections are not eligible. Cash prize: \$100.
- **Note:** *The Kansas Authors Club Poetry Chapbook Award will NOT be a category in 2026. We will reconsider for future year awards.*

CATEGORY CRITERIA FOR PUBLISHED CHILDREN’S BOOKS

- **Kansas Authors Club Children’s Book Award:** The book must be intended for young readers. This category includes everything from illustrated books for pre-readers to chapter books written with a pre-teen or teen audience in mind. *Young adult novels should be entered in the Coffin Award category.* Cash prize: \$100.
- **“It Looks Like a Million” Children’s Book Design Award:** This contest is for books that meet the above criteria, AND by independent authors, which includes self-published and small press/indie press authors. For example, the author of the book must be the primary decision maker for production, including design and layout, of the book. Authors may have hired editors, layout designers, etc. Cash prize: \$100.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR SUBMITTING

1. Complete the Book Awards submission form at Submittable. *(See next item before completing.)* <https://kansasauthorsclub.submittable.com/submit>
2. Optional, but preferred: upload a galley copy in PDF format when you complete the Submittable form. If you are a self-published author, this would be the file you submit to most print-on-demand facilities. If you work with a small press, the press should be able to provide you with this file. If a galley is not available to you, a final manuscript of your book in Microsoft Word format is also acceptable. This option will allow us to more easily share your book with members of the reading committee.
3. Mail two (2) copies of your book to the KAC Book Awards Manager. USPS media mail is adequate. Books must be postmarked by the submission deadline to qualify. This step is required regardless of whether you are able to supply a galley copy of your book as described in step 2. *Note: If you submit for a prose book award and a design award, you do NOT need to send copies of your book twice. A total of two copies is adequate for entry to both contests.*
4. Books submitted to the contest will not be returned.
 - One copy of each book will be donated to the Kansas Authors Collection at KU's Spencer Research Library.
 - One copy of the winner and finalist books will be donated to the designated library or award donor.
 - The extra copy of non-winning books will be made available to members to pick up after the fall gathering award's ceremony. If the book is not picked up, it will be donated to an area library sale, as the contest manager sees fit. Books will not be returned by mail.
5. Up to three (3) finalists in each category will be announced in late summer.
6. The winning books will be announced at the Sunday awards ceremony at the annual fall gathering of the Kansas Authors Club. The event typically takes place the first weekend of October. Watch the Kansas Authors Club website for event details.

2026 BOOK AWARD MAILING ADDRESS:

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