

“Movin’ On” with the GFO Writing Contest

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After a one year hiatus, the GFO Writing Contest is back! Mark your calendars for the submission date February 1, 2011. You’ve got months, but now isn’t too early to start. You probably have loose research ends to tie up before sitting down to write. Let this contest be a motivator to get one of your important stories on paper.

The theme this year is “Movin’ On.” All of our ancestors have moved – across the ocean, across the country, from the city to the country, from the country to the city, away from family, closer to family. Their move may have been very dramatic – a 2000 trek on the Oregon Trail – or less dramatic. Why did they move? What was happening where they lived that made them need to get away? What was so much better about the place they moved to that they would go through the discomfort of uprooting themselves? Or, maybe it was just for the adventure of it! This theme is rich in social context. Your family member participate in history and the shifting of a culture.

Include particulars about your ancestors, building your story’s characters, so we can see them as we read. Build the environment, make us feel like we are there. Build a plot with suspense, that includes the adversity propelling your ancestors to leave their homes, the difficulties of adjusting to the new life, and the resolution at the end. Remember to be factual throughout, indicating surmises when you make them.

Whether you enter the writing contest or not, plan on attending the GFO Montly meeting on April 9th. The entire GFO Monthly meeting will revolve around publishing your family history. We’ll have a speaker, and provide information about different formats for publishing your family history work, on the continuum of pictures to writing and any combination of both. And, of course, we’ll present writing contest awards.

If you have any questions, email Peggy Baldwin at peggy.baldwin@family-passages.com. Also check out our web page -- <http://www.gfo.org/writingcontest/index.htm> for some articles about how to write for the contest and to see past winning stories.

Please carefully read the contest requirements below, so you don’t have any last minute surprises!

Contest Requirements:

- ◆ Piece must be written to the theme: “Movin’ On” – a factual story about ancestors who moved from one place to another.
- ◆ **Length** — 750 to 5000 words
- ◆ Documentation in the form of endnotes or footnotes is **required**.
- ◆ Story must be submitted in electronic form—Word or RTF file, submitted as an email attachment or burned to a CD or floppy disk
- ◆ Submitted between January 1 and February 1, 2010.
- ◆ Plan ahead and make a concerted effort to attend the award presentation at the GFO Monthly meeting on Saturday, April 9, 2011