



## WV Writers 2026 Contest Winners

### Book Length Prose

1st – “Unlocking Lakin” by Courtney Markham

2nd – “A Forever Home” by Cheryl Kula

3rd – “When the Signs Come” by James (Jim) Mullins

Honorable Mention – “Hard As Stone: A Sam and Meg Stone Mystery” by Joe Stephens

### Short Story

1st – “Gracie Waves” by Tina Caldwell

2nd – “Ray Boyd's Dream” by James Wilson

3rd – “Blessed Assurance” by Louis Schlesinger

Honorable Mention – “Another time, another place” by Dan Nicksich

Honorable Mention – “Cashmere” by Devonnie Parsons Brown

Honorable Mention – “Curing Schizophrenia with Common Household Items” by Julian Hickman

Honorable Mention – “The Color Television” by Joyce Allan

Honorable Mention – “Wolf Song” by Jane Freeman

### Flash Fiction

1st – “V.J.'s Apple Pie” by Jeffrey Beverly

2nd – “Always the Lookout” by Joshua Robinson

3rd – “Beauty is Pain” by Malorie Fendley

Honorable Mention – “Fire Cider” by Melinda Tauler

### Long Poetry

1st – “ABUSE CAN BE” by James Long

2nd – “Lazarus” by Earl Keener

3rd – “GEM STONE” by Earl Keener

Honorable Mention – “Origami Rockets” by Thomas Donlon

Honorable Mention – “The Happiest I Ever Saw Her” by Tierney Chapman

Honorable Mention – “The night I drank too much” by Kally Hall

### Short Poetry

- 1st – "In This Time of Extremes" by Julie Pratt
- 2nd – "Within the Hour" by Michael Chalmers
- 3rd – "Sympathy in Feathers" by David Prather
- Honorable Mention – "Mark of Cain" by April Furrow
- Honorable Mention – "Two Tales of a City" by Julie Pratt

### Nonfiction

- 1st – "Sometimes Braking" by Emily Kohler
- 2nd – "It Was Definitely Good Seeing You" by Emily Kohler
- 3rd – "The Orange Corvette" by Connie Kinsey
- Honorable Mention – "Backbone" by Kelsey Lacek
- Honorable Mention – "Hog Killing" by Cheryl Kula
- Honorable Mention – "The Night Nurse" by M. Lynne Squires

### New Mountain Voices, Grades 6-8

- 1st – "The Weight of Charlie's Wings" by Lora Gresham
- 2nd – "Standing Strong" by Isaiah Fitts
- 3rd – "The Last Lesson" by Asad Tanveer
- Honorable Mention – "Behind the Screen" by Adelyn Wallington

### New Mountain Voices, Grades 9-12 Prose

- 1st – "Take Me To the River and Bathe Me Clean" by Cadence Moore
- 2nd – "Florence" by Charlotte Pate
- 3rd – "Dysmorphia" by Christina White
- Honorable Mention – "The Great Bombardment Before the Bombs" by Echo Smith
- Honorable Mention – "The Hell of Holidays" by Sydney Meadows

### New Mountain Voices, Grades 9-12 Poetry

- 1st – "Towanda" by Saelyr Wilson
- 2nd – "Gifted" by Zoe Zervos
- 3rd – "The Warrior" by Hailee Johnson
- Honorable Mention – "The Sunflower" by Sundas Mazhar
- Honorable Mention – "When Chickens Fly" by Katherine "Katie Beth" Nichols

### People's Choice Poetry

- 1st – "Literary Alleys of Pittsburgh" by Elise Power
- 2nd – "Missing Mother" by Derek Gilman
- 3rd – "Such Tiny Ambitions" by Greg Clary

### People's Choice Prose

1st – “Fire Cider” by Melinda Tauler

2nd – “I Am This Man” by Derek Gilman

3rd – “Old Bones” by Jessica Todd

### Writer's Wall Poetry

1st – “Foxes In the Meadow” by Betsy Mars

2nd – “By the Signs” by Greg Clary

3rd – “Ode to a Pencil” by Ted Charnley

### Writer's Wall Prose

1st – “I Am This Man” by Derek Gilman

2nd – “Standing In Line at the Taco Bell” by M. Lynne Squires

3rd – “The Bond” by Randy Underwood