2027 GRHS Youth Essay Contest

Sponsored by

GERMANS FROM RUSSIA HERITAGE SOCIETY in conjunction with the 56th annual GRHS Convention

GRHS Essay Contest Theme

"Giant Steppes Toward Freedom"

Contest Rules
and
Entry Form

Germans from Russia Heritage Society
1125 W. Turnpike Avenue - Bismarck, ND 58501-8115
Phone - (701)223-6167
Home page - http://www.grhs.org
An international non-profit tax-exempt organization

Germans from Russia Heritage Society (GRHS)
Sponsored Annual
GRHS Essay Contest

THEME: Giant Steppes Toward Freedom

An International GRHS Essay Contest, sponsored by the Germans from Russia Heritage Society, headquartered in Bismarck, North Dakota, will be held to encourage students to learn about the history and culture of the German-Russians, people who emigrated from Germany into Russia during the 18th and 19th centuries. Today, in the USA, Canada and other countries in the Western Hemisphere, these people have become known as Germans from Russia.

Contest judging will commence after the close of the Contest on 31 March with the winners being announced after the judging has been completed. Winning contestants will be invited to receive their awards at a luncheon held in their honor during the 56th Annual GRHS Convention, in July, 2027, held in Bismarck, North Dakota.

ELIGIBILITY: The GRHS Essay Contest is open to any student who meets eligibility in a specific category. All entries must pertain to one or more of the following "Black Sea" areas: **Odessa, Kherson, Bessarabia, Crimea / Taurida, Jekaterinoslaw, Mariupol / Molochna, Dobrudscha, Caucasus (Dobruja) No entries pertaining to Volga areas will be accepted.**

These students may attend public, private, parochial, or home schools, and be students attending accredited universities, as full-time undergraduate students. The subject of the paper must be directly related to "Black Sea" German Russian history, heritage or culture, and be the contestant's original work. Use of AI or plagiarized work will be disqualified. Resubmission of previously judged work is not permitted.

CATEGORIES:

International winners will be chosen in each of the following categories:

- I. Middle School - 6th thru 8th grade.
- II. High School - 9th thru 12th grade.
- III. High School Senior – This student will be awarded the Gwen Pritzkau Scholarship.
- IV. University or College Undergraduate, limited to undergraduate students enrolled full-time in degree-seeking programs. Two scholarships will be awarded.

TOPICS: Essay topics may include any and all aspects of German-Russian heritage including:

- Cultural Anthropology of the German Russians.
- Historical analysis of the reasons for the Diaspora (scatter) of the German-Russians.
- German-Russian history in the Americas and Canada.
- German-Russian history in Russia, the Soviet Union, loss of Soviet citizenship, labor camps in the Soviet Union, and labor camps in England and France after World War II.
- Personal family history, insofar as it relates to German-Russian history and culture.

FORMAT: Format for the entries may include:

- Research papers, including persuasive works and/or historical analysis.
- Creative writing, including short stories, fictional diaries, plays, historical fiction, and descriptive prose. Creative writing endeavors should evidence an exploration and understanding of German-Russian history and culture.
- Genealogical history of a particular family including individual histories of ancestors.
- Digital Media, including but not limited to PowerPoint, short film, and website design. Please note: all digital media will be judged according to the same criteria as other entries.
- ***ABSOLUTELY NO AI GENERATED OR AI FORMATTED ESSAYS WILL BE ACCEPTED. Original writing ONLY, DO NOT "RUN IT THROUGH AI" BEFORE SUBMITTING!!***

PAPER REQUIREMENTS

Middle School:

- Entries should be typed, double spaced, and printed on one side of paper only.
- Entries must include an Official GRHS Essay Contest Entry Form.
- Contestant's name should be on the entry form only and should not appear on the essay.

High School:

- Entries must include a Works Cited/Bibliography page.
- Research papers must show footnotes or use either MLA or APA citation.
- Creative writing endeavors are welcomed and should include a bibliography of reference materials evidencing an exploration of German-Russian history.
- Maximum length: 5 pages, not including Works Cited and cover sheets.
- Entries should be typed, double-spaced, and printed on one side of paper only.
- Entries must include an Official GRHS Essay Contest Entry Form.
- Contestant's name should be on the entry form only and should not appear on the essay.

College/University:

- Creative writing endeavors are welcomed and must include a bibliography of reference materials evidencing an exploration of German-Russian history.
- Research papers must include either footnotes or citation using MLA or APA. If an alternative citation format is used, that format should be listed at the top of the works cited page.
- Maximum length: 5 pages, not including Works Cited and cover sheets.
- Entries should be typed, double-spaced, and printed on one side of paper only.
- Entries must include an Official GRHS Essay Contest Entry Form.
- Contestant's name should be on the entry form only and should not appear on the essay.

SOURCES OF INFORMATION:

- Contact the Information Desk at your local public library for material to assist in research on German-Russian history. Many GRHS chapters and genealogical societies have donated or provided books and periodicals for their local libraries. The library genealogy and history sections may contain helpful information.
- Contact members of your family. Elderly members of your family may have useful information and some members of your family may have worked at transcribing your family's history.
- Helpful websites:

  Germans from Russia Heritage Society www.grhs.org.
  Germans from Russia Heritage Collection http://www.lib.ndsu.nodak.edu/grhc.

JUDGING CRITERIA:

Entries are judged solely on the quality of research underlying the entry, and the writing style of the entry. NOTE: a substantial portion of the scoring rubric is based upon how the paper addresses *German-Russian* history and heritage. All entries are submitted anonymously to a panel of judges, who complete a scoring card for each entry. Scores are then totaled to determine contest winners. Criteria for judging include historical accuracy, clarity, and originality of thought, creativity, and style. Winning entries, regardless of format, must show evidence of serious research on German-Russian history and culture.

ABSOLUTELY NO AI GENERATED OR AI FORMATTED ESSAYS WILL BE ACCEPTED. Original writing ONLY, DO NOT "RUN IT THROUGH AI" BEFORE SUBMITTING!!

AWARDS:

With the winner's authorization, winning essays may be published in the GRHS Heritage Review and/or electronically on the GRHS website. In addition, winners in each category will receive the following:

Middle School: First Place: 1st place Trophy and $150; 2nd Place: Runner-Up Trophy and $100.

High School: First Place: 1st place Trophy and $150; 2nd Place: Runner-Up Trophy and $100.

High School Senior Scholarship: Trophy and a $1000 Gwen Pritzkau Scholarship will be awarded to the highest scoring high school senior entry. This scholarship is provided by the Heritage Foundation for Germans from Russia.

College/University: Trophy and a $1000 Vera Hoff Scholarship will be awarded to the highest scoring university entry.

Official GRHS Essay Contest Entry Form

Completed essay, signed entry form, and release must be emailed by 31 March 2027 to: nd_roots@yahoo.com
This contest information and this entry form are also available on the Youth Program pages on the GRHS website at www.grhs.org.

"Giant Steppes Toward Freedom"

Official GRHS Essay Contest Entry Form

Contestant's Name: _____ *Date*:_____

Age: _____ *Date of Birth:* _____

Contest level *(circle the one that applies):*

Middle school / High school / High school senior / College/University Undergraduate

Home Address: _____

City: _____*State:*_____*Zip:* _____

*Telephone No:*_____ *E-mail Address:* _____

Name of School: _____

*Phone #:*_____*E-mail Address:* _____

Parent's or Legal Guardian's Name: _____

Contestant's Signature or E-signature: _____

Date: _____

(Each entry MUST have a copy of this completed official entry form attached).

GRHS Essay Contest Publication Release

We, the GRHS Committee, are excited to share your work with the GRHS members and the world. Therefore, we ask your permission to publish your entry and/or your photo. Please note that entering or winning the GRHS Essay contest does not depend on your willingness to share your work. However, we will be grateful if you grant us permission to do so.

****

Please check one box, and fill out the information below:

_____As a contestant in the Germans from Russia Heritage Society's GRHS Essay Contest, my parent/guardian and I hereby give our consent to GRHS to make public (publish in both print and on the Internet) the information which has been submitted by the undersigned for the GRHS Essay Contest.

_____I do not wish to have my essay or photo published.

Please print, sign and if under 18 years of age include parent/guardian signature.

Contestant's Name (print) _____

Contestant's Signature _____Date_____

E-mail Address _____ Phone # _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____ Country _____

Parent/Guardian Name (print) _____

Signature or E-Signature of Parent/Guardian _____

Date_____

Please submit this form along with the GRHS Essay Contest Entry Form to:

nd_roots@yahoo.com