



James Oliver Curwood

James Oliver Curwood was born here in Owosso in the back of his father's cobbler shop. He started writing at the age of nine on any scrap of paper he could find. As he grew up so did his stories. His little short stories grew up into adult action - adventure novels. In the age before television, books were the staples of entertainment for families. Mr. Curwood's stories containing such exciting characters as Canadian Mounties, wolves, and bears set in the Yukon, Canada, and Alaska were highly anticipated. Many of his stories were made into movies

James Oliver built Curwood Castle in 1923 as his writing studio. Here he would write his stories, work on his conservation work, and meet with his publishers and editors. Curwood wrote 33 books and hundreds of short stories. In the 1920's he was the highest paid author (per word) in the world and the first author to make over a million dollars. Even though Curwood could have lived anywhere he wanted to, he chose to live in Owosso. He said "Owosso is the nicest place in the world".

Curwood died in 1927 after a short illness. His books were still being made into movies as recently as 1989. In Canada some of his books are still required reading for schoolchildren. A boy born here in Shiawassee County grew up to be one of the best known authors in the world. And you can follow in his footsteps.

Let's keep the legacy of James Oliver Curwood alive.



Curwood Festival Saga Writing Contest

This writing contest is to promote an interest in school age children to write and to help keep the memory of James Oliver Curwood alive. The contest is open to all schoolchildren of public, parochial, and home schooled students 4th through 12th grade in Shiawassee County.

Stories should be written in the Curwood style. Mr. Curwood wrote stories about the wilderness and man's connection to the wilderness. He was interested in conservation and hunting. He wrote about the animals that inhabited the wild.

Your stories should use a 12 point font of your choice and have margins of no more than one inch on each side. They should be double spaced and typed. You will be judged on grammar, spelling, punctuation, style, and originality.

Stories are due in by March 1st and should be original work. Stories must include an application form which can be downloaded from the Curwood Festival website and must be included with your entry. Contest judges retain the right to refuse entries that do not meet the submission criteria. Winners will be notified by email or telephone.

Elementary Division includes grades 4th & 5th. Your stories need to be between 2 and 4 pages long. A book report on a Curwood book may be used instead. First Prize in this division is a \$150 prize and a \$100 prize for second place.

The Middle School division is for grades 6th, 7th, and 8th. Your stories should be between 4 and 8 pages. First Prize in this category is a \$250 prize and a \$100 prize for second place.

The High School division has been divided into two divisions this year. A \$500 scholarship will be awarded to the college of your choice to a winner from the 11th or 12th grade. A winner from the 9th & 10th grade will receive an \$300 prize.

All first prize winners will be presented to the Curwood Festival board at their annual April meeting and will also have a chance to ride in the Curwood parade.

All stories become the property of the Curwood Festival.



Most of all we want you to have fun with this!

If you have any questions please email denicegrace@msn.com or please call Curwood Castle at 989-723-2155 between the hours of 1 p.m. and 5 p.m. Tuesday through Sunday

If you mail your story please address it to: attention Curwood Festival Saga Writing Contest. Stories may not be submitted by email.

Stories may be dropped off or mailed to any of the following locations:

The Curwood Festival Office - 212 S. Washington St. Owosso, MI 48867 open Tuesday through Thursday 10:30a.m. – 2:30 p.m.

Shiawassee District Library - Owosso Branch
-502 W. Main St. Owosso 48867 – during normal business hours

Shiawassee District Library-Durand branch-
700 N. Saginaw Street Durand, MI 48429
during normal business hours

Shiawassee Regional Chamber of Commerce –
215 N Water St. Owosso – The Armory building,
third floor from 8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.



**A quote from The Sons of the Forests an
autobiography written by James Oliver
Curwood**

“Tonight, I am in a little cabin in the heart of a great wilderness. Outside it is dark. I can hear the wind sighing in the thick spruce tops. I hear the laughter of a stream out of which I took my supper of trout. The People of the Night are awake, for a little while ago I heard a wolf howl, and, not far away, in an old stub, lives an owl that hoots at the light in my window. I think it’s going to storm. There is heaviness in the air, and, in the drowse of it, the sweetness of distant rain....I am strangely contented as I start writing... “

Curwood Festival’s Saga Writing Contest

