

Enter the 9th Speculative Fiction Contest

By Gary Lange

Some of us dream about entering a blue alien body, complete with a tail, on the moon Pandora, while others hope their hot tub turns into a time machine, and even a few of us want to don the outfit that would make us Iron Man. The rest of you though, have more practical ideas about the future, and many of them revolve around our favorite topic, actuarial science! Even as you read this, you may not be aware that you have many different thoughts on various aspects of actuarial science that you should share. Stop reading for a minute, and if you have an actuarial thought, jot it down. Now that you are back, read the rest of this page to see what you can do with your idea, and how it might even make you famous, at least among actuaries.

First, you want to put your idea in the form of an exciting story, so that once a reader starts reading, the reader won't be able to put down your story until he or she has digested all of the details. Second, with such creativity bubbling off the page, you should probably send me a copy of the story, so I can share it with the world and help the future arrive a lot sooner! Third, you should encourage all of your friends to share their ideas through this contest, too!

So for all of the Avatar fans, time travelers, heroes and other actuaries who speculate about the future in their daydreams, now is the time to use that imagination to take a shot at describing the future of our profession, express an emotion about the changes in our jobs, tell a story, or just make that definite point that needs to be made.

Enter the 9th Actuarial Speculative Fiction contest, proudly sponsored again this year by the Society of Actuaries' Technology Section, the Actuary of the Future Section, and the Forecasting & Futurism Section, the three Sections that assist us in preparing for the future! The future comes faster and faster every day, so think ahead now and imagine what might be coming.

The rules for this writing contest are very simple, as they should be when someone decides to put speculative thoughts on paper:

- The story must include some sort of actuarial topic.
- The author must have passed at least one actuarial exam.
- The story should be fewer than 6,000 words (if you have to count the words, you are using too many).

For those looking for incentives other than sharing their wonderful, eye-opening ideas with the rest of the world, there are prizes in this contest!

Best overall story	\$200
Second best overall story	\$100
Most unique use of technology in a story	\$ 50
Best story emphasizing forecasting or futurism methods	\$ 50
The most creative actuarial career of the future	\$ 50
Readers' favorite story	A technological surprise!

The top two best entries will be determined by Dr. Bob Mielke, professor of English at Truman State University, with additional comments by your contest organizer, Gary Lange. The awards presented by each section will be chosen by that section council, so be smart and read up on each section at soa.org.

The contest begins with this announcement and ends Jan. 31, 2011. Winners will be announced on April 1, 2011. Submit all entries to me at garyslange@yahoo.com. Each entry will be published online at the Society of Actuaries' website.

Tell the actuaries what their world will soon look like! Start writing now! ☆