



Muskoka Novel Marathon 2026 Registration Information

MARK YOUR CALENDAR!
REGISTRATION OPENS MARCH 10, 2026 at 7 P.M. EDT
NOVEL MARATHON HAPPENS: THURSDAY JULY 16 – SUNDAY, JULY 19

.....IF YOU WANT TO COME, PLEASE READ EVERYTHING BELOW.....

This year we are setting our in-person writer cap to the traditional **40 writers again**. There is no cap on online attendance, of course.

Registration will be online as usual but we are setting it up for **online seat-selection** again! By the click of a button you'll be able to choose your seat location at the same time you reserve it, and at the Marathon, just go in and set up. If you raised \$1,000 or more last year we will contact you prior to registration opening to take your selection. For everyone else, it's first come first served, starting 7 p.m. on March 10.

Note, we are not sure yet whether mobile phone registration will be a problem this year: we will inform you closer to the registration date.

Registration fee remains **CAD\$100 in person and \$25 online**. This is also the start time for ordering one or more of our special four-colour-printed MNM 2026 25th ANNIVERSARY t-shirts at \$30 each (same as last year), with multiple colours and styles to choose from for ladies and gentlemen—plus our commemorative MNM 25th ANNIVERSARY TUMBLERS—see pages 6-10 for the options. Final date for t-shirt orders is **May 30**. We will be asking for first and second choices.

Returning writers: Check to see if you can [log in to your account](#) on our website prior to registration. If you cannot remember your password, you can reset it by clicking on the “Forgot Password” link under the log in screen and watching for an email to be sent to the address you registered with previously. When registration for the event opens, you will start the process as usual, but then LOG IN when the checkout screen prompts you rather than REGISTERING a new account. If all else fails, create a new account.

New writers: go to our website at www.muskokanovelmarchathon.com, starting 7 p.m. EDT March 10, and click the button that says “Register Here”. Then **follow the instructions**. You're not under a time limit to supply your biography, headshot, etc.; instead, we will give you your own webpage on our site that you can control, adding your own content. To be added to the “Current Writers” rotation on our home page, post a photo on your page.

Re cancellation refunds: Life happens. We understand. If you must cancel your registration, we will miss you! If you cancel before June 30, 2026, we will retain a \$25 administration fee and refund the remainder of your payment. On or after June 30, your full registration fee is non-refundable.

Event Information

The 2026 Muskoka Novel Marathon takes place from Thursday, July 16 to Sunday, July 19 at the Port Sydney Community Hall. Setup is between 5:30 and 6:30 p.m. on Thursday, July 16. Opening ceremonies will begin in person and on Zoom at 6:30 p.m. Snacks will be available.

Writing begins at 8 p.m. The venue will be accessible 24 hours a day during the event (doors are locked at night but a designated person will let you in), and the Zoom is 24 hours too except between 3 and 4 a.m. each night. Three meals per day will be served Friday-Sunday at 9 a.m., 1 p.m. and 6 p.m. Coffee, tea and spring water will always be available.

The Point of It All

There are two reasons we put our time, energy and love into organizing this event:

1. To raise funds for YMCA Simcoe-Muskoka's adult literacy programs, because literacy, numeracy, ESL and computer skills liberate people, give them possibilities they never had before, and change lives;
2. To provide a unique opportunity for writers to step out of their everyday lives, write like crazy with a bunch of other writers doing same, and compete to have their manuscript seen by a publishing professional.

Writers' Handbook & Manuscript Template

Prior to the event, you will receive an email with our Writers' Handbook, which contains all sorts of useful information. Stash it somewhere easy to find on your computer for reference during the event. You'll also get our handy manuscript template in Word, which is preformatted to the MNM standard manuscript format. Just open it up, follow the instructions to write in Word or import if you use Scrivener, and write!

Fundraising

Funds raised support adult literacy initiatives in Muskoka. We solicit donations from the public during the event, but the bulk of the funds raised come from YOU, the writers, gathering pledges from friends, families, co-workers and whoever else you can inspire into donating. **There's a vintage trophy for the most outstanding fundraiser, lots of cool prizes for the top fundraisers, and the top 15 fundraisers who raise at least \$1,000 are guaranteed a spot at MNM 2027 (July 15-18).**

If you've never done this before... don't worry. We have a great online donation system that you will be hooked into, instructions on how to use it, a template letter to send to prospective donors, and other goodies to help you inspire donor generosity. We'll send you all this info once you're registered.

Writing Parameters

- All forms of writing are permissible, including poetry, anthologies, short stories, non-fiction, etc.

- Due to a paucity of Young Adult/Juvenile submissions in the last few Marathons, we are merging that category with Adult this year for one overall category.
- If you are submitting your manuscript for judging for the Best Novel award, **you may not submit any words other than those written during the specified 72 hours and at the event location.** You may use a pre-prepared one-page writing outline to help organize your writing.
- Collaborations by two writers maximum are permitted.
- **IMPORTANT:** Even with a completed novel manuscript, **a synopsis of your story is REQUIRED.** Note: Synopsis writing is a necessary skill for professional novelists. For writers wishing to submit their work for judging, electronic copies will be accepted by the Novel Marathon Committee up to 8:00 p.m. on Sunday.
- The judges reserve the right to declare “no award” if none of the manuscripts are deemed acceptable for submission to a publisher or agent.
- The full set of rules will be in the *Writer’s Handbook*.

Awards

- Writers who wish to take part in the competition can submit their manuscripts electronically at or before the end of the marathon. The judges, who may include authors, librarians, editors, book publishers and bookstore owners but who are all total bibliophiles, will determine the winner.
- Winners of all awards will be announced and trophies presented at our Wrap-Up Party on Saturday, September 26 at the Y Literacy office in Huntsville and on Zoom. The Best Novel winner will have about six weeks to revise before submitting their manuscript to the editor or agent.
- Once the manuscript has been sent to the editor or agent, the discussion will continue between that party and the author directly. The Muskoka Novel Marathon will cease to be involved from that point onwards (except to wish you the best of luck!)
- A list of other awards will appear in the *Marathon Writer’s Handbook*, or you can learn about them [on our website](#).

Venue

- The event will take place at the Port Sydney Community Hall, 607 Muskoka Road 10, Port Sydney, Ontario, Canada. ([Google Maps link](#).)
- **IMPORTANT:** The writing space is one large room. There may be opportunities to tuck yourself away at certain times, but please be prepared to work in this communal atmosphere.
- There is plentiful free parking.
- There will be free Wi-Fi access and we’ll give you the login info on the website and in the *Writer’s Handbook*.

Hydration and Nourishment

- Locally-sourced coffee, tea and genuine Muskoka spring water will be available 24/3 throughout the event, and the meals will be provided by generous local eateries. We will provide the meal schedule at the venue. Our awesome kitchen team will take care of you!
- We understand that some writers may have dietary restrictions, but unfortunately we cannot guarantee

that we will have meals to suit everyone since most of them are donated by local sponsors. We will attempt to provide vegetarian options at every meal, but if you have strict dietary constraints, you may wish to bring extra food. Writers will have access to fridge space in the kitchen area.

- The Community Hall is *not* a licensed facility. NO alcohol is allowed on the premises. Please respect this—alcohol consumption violates our contract and we would like to be invited back to use the space in future years. There’s a place or two in Port Sydney where booze can be had, and plenty of bars in Huntsville and Bracebridge.

Social Media

For more news and to hang out with other Novel Marathoners, please join the [Muskoka Novel Marathoners Facebook Group](#). For official public announcements, go to our official Facebook page, [Muskoka Novel Marathon](#).

Accommodation

- Some writers choose to bring sleeping bags and camping mats and sleep in the building, which is permitted (there’s a nice little space with blackout curtains; you must provide your own sleeping bag and whatever padding you need). Some go to a private home or local motel and commute to the event. Totally up to you!
- There are motels (e.g., Three Pines Lodge), Airbnbs and Venmos in the area, plus more accommodations in Bracebridge (19-minute drive to the venue) and Huntsville (16-minute drive to the venue). Book early (like, now) to avoid disappointment as Muskoka is *very* popular in mid-July.

Questions?

Please contact our friendly **convenor, KM Wehrstein**

(while we search for a Writer Liaison!)

By phone or text: 705 789-7497

By Facebook Messenger: friend KM Wehrstein or join “[Muskoka Novel Marathoners](#)”

By email: writerliaison@muskokanovelmarathon.com

There is also more Marathon info on our website, muskokanovelmarathon.com.

By the way... might you be interested in becoming Writer Liaison?

Fun job for a sociable person! Contact KM.

Muskoka Novel Marathon 2026 Merch

HAPPY 25TH ANNIVERSARY, MUSKOKA NOVEL MARATHON!

Check out our special quarter-century t-shirt design:



First-ever four-colour printing on an MNM t-shirt, for more impactful evocation of the spirit of MNM! Note: the slogans from the backs of all past Marathon t-shirts are on the book spines.

.....and.....

Our 25th Anniversary Commemorative Tumbler



Stainless steel, holds 600 ml/20 oz of your favourite beverage, keeping it at the temperature you want (vacuum-insulated). Suitable for placing next to your laptop at the Marathon for literary caffeination (lidded to prevent spills), and, afterwards, on your mantelpiece or in your vehicle's cup holder!

Ordering information

MNM 2026 25th Anniversary T-shirts:

Once again, Portage Promotionals is providing our custom-printed Muskoka Novel Marathon t-shirts! T-shirts come in two styles (v-neck or crew neck) and two fits (ladies or unisex). All shirts are preshrunk 7.5 oz cotton. **The ladies' styles have a tapered body and fit SMALL. And we mean *really* small.** (Approximate sizes are S=2, M=4, L=6, XL=8, XXL=10-12.)

Unisex sizes range from S (about equivalent to a Ladies 6) to XXL (about equivalent to a Men's XL). This year's colour selection was narrowed to those shades we felt were harmonious with the four-colour design. (Concept by KM Wehrstein, rendering by Portage Promo owner Beth Brittain.)

Price per shirt is same as last year, CAD\$30.00 each, HST included, plus shipping if necessary. **Final date for t-shirt orders is May 30.** Note the shirts are shown from behind on the selection chart (next two pages) so you can see how the new design matches with each colour. The colours shown may not exactly represent the actual shirt colour, depending on your screen.

MNM 2026 25th Anniversary Tumblers:

Price: \$20.00 each, HST included, plus shipping (estimated \$15-16) if necessary. (We will find out the exact shipping cost prior to registration opening.)

Available only in black.

Product details per Portage Promo:

- 3.5" Diameter x 7" H
- 18/8 Stainless Steel
- Double walled with vacuum insulation
- Exterior matte finish with silver trim
- Push on clear acrylic lid with plastic sliding closure
- Holds up to 600 ml. (20 oz.)
- For use with hot and cold beverages
- BPA free and FDA compliant
- Individually retail packaged

Unisex Crew Neck S-2XL (* indicates 3XL available)

Crew is using a 7.5oz soft style cotton tee. Heather's are 65/35 poly/cotton



Ladies' Crew Neck S-2XL (*indicates 3XL available)

Ladies Crew is using a 8.8oz cotton tee.



Unisex V-Neck S-2XL

V-Neck is using a 6oz poly/cotton ringspun tee, lightweight.

Black Heather Charcoal Heather Red Navy



Ladies' V-Neck S-3XL

Ladies V-Neck is using a 8.8oz cotton tee.

Black Sport Grey Red Purple Navy Royal



Writers set up for the start of the 2024 Marathon, our ecstatic return to in-person Marathoning.