Enter to win a $1.3M home for just $19 and an essay

A Canadian woman is holding a contest for her $1.3 million home for the bargain-basement price of $19 and an essay.

Alberta resident Alla Wagner decided to move out of her $1.3 million family home due to declining health. But after failing to sell it the traditional way, she organized a "Write A Letter, Win A House" contest that asks applicants to write 350 words on why moving to the lakefront property would change their life.

Entry into the contest costs $19 and, once the contest is closed, the public will choose the best 500 entries by voting. An independent panel of judges will then sort through the 500 entries and select the final winner.

Courtesy of Write A Letter, Win A House Facebook.

To make the contest viable, the money raised by the applicants has to surpass the asking price of the home — the contest, which started on Jan. 5, will go on until early April and potentially longer so that it can reach the approximate number of 60,000 applicants required. (Canadian contest law will require the contest to end if the asking price is still not reached by July 5.)

The property itself comes pretty close to what most would call a dream home — the nearly 4,000-square-foot lake house in Millarville, Alberta, (40 miles south of Calgary) has views of the nearby lake, three bedrooms, a piano room and a wine cellar.

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“I love watching flocks of geese and ducks traveling to and from the pond, seeing the open skies, starry nights, wildlife, and views of the snow-packed mountains,” Wagner wrote on the Facebook page for the contest.

Courtesy of Write A Letter, Win A House Facebook.

The idea of holding a writing contest came to Wagner from the 1996 movie The Spitfire Grill, in which friends of a bedridden woman hold a writing contest to auction off her restaurant in small-town Maine.

While the Facebook page for Wagner's contest gathered over 16,000 likes, some were also skeptical of Wagner's way of selling.

"So who is going to read the required 68,000 entries (minimum)?" Jonathan Eeftens from Calgary wrote.

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