



VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS

406 W. 34th St., Kansas City, MO 64111
816-756-3390 (phone) 816-968-1169 (fax)
www.vfw.org; magazine@vfw.org

Writer's Guidelines

WRITING FOR VFW MAGAZINE

VFW magazine is published by the Veterans of Foreign Wars at its national headquarters in Kansas City, Mo. *VFW* is the nation's 42nd largest magazine in circulation. It is published monthly (the June and July issues are combined) and has a readership of 1.7 million war veterans, ranging from WWII through Afghanistan and Iraq.

Subscription is largely through VFW membership, which is restricted to honorably discharged veterans who received an officially recognized campaign medal. Founded in 1899, the VFW is the oldest major veterans organization in America and has been publishing a magazine since 1904.

TOPICS

Recognition of veterans and military service is paramount at the VFW. Articles related to current foreign policy and defense along with all veterans issues are of prime interest. Topics pertaining to American armed forces abroad and international events affecting U.S. national security are particularly in demand. Articles dealing with military history must take a fresh approach.

Some national political and social issues also qualify for inclusion in the magazine, especially if covered by VFW resolutions.

And, of course, we are always looking for up-to-date stories on veterans concerns. Insight into how recent legislation affects the average veteran is always welcome. Anything that contributes to a better understanding of how the Department of Veterans Affairs operates is useful to veterans. Positive, upbeat stories on successful veterans who have made significant contributions to their communities make for good reading, too, especially if they are severely disabled.

Also, interviews with prominent figures are of interest if professionally done. But no Q & A's, only narrative format. No first-person accounts or personality profiles are accepted.

We do not accept poetry, fiction, reprints or book reviews.

MANUSCRIPTS

Manuscripts are usually 1,000 words, depending on the subject. Simultaneous submissions are not considered. Changes are often required to make copy conform to editorial needs. Absolute accuracy is a must. For facts and quotes, please cite references. *Quotes from relevant individuals are a must.* Bibliographies are welcome.

E-mail submissions are encouraged. Microsoft Word documents are best, however, most word processing software is translatable.

STYLE

Clarity and simplicity are the two cardinal virtues of good writing. Originality, concrete detail, short paragraphs and strong words are essential. Average sentence length should be about 17 words, and you should avoid using paragraphs longer than seven or eight typewritten lines. Write in the active voice, and avoid flowery prose and military jargon. Please feel free to suggest descriptive decks (sub-titles) and use subheads in the body of the copy. Consult *The Associated Press Stylebook* for correct grammar and punctuation.

PHOTOGRAPHS

Photos of exceptional interest are considered for publication. Payment is arranged in advance. Captions (including names and titles of those depicted, when the photo was taken and the significance of the event) must accompany photos, including a separate caption sheet. Pictures accompanying manuscripts are generally for one-time use only. Please send along all relevant sketches, maps, charts and photos. Sources of additional artwork are also most helpful.

Digital images need to be 8" x 10" @ 300 dpi. Submit in .jpg format. Color prints and transparencies are also accepted.

PAYMENT

Payment depends upon length, writing quality and research performed. Commissioned articles are negotiable. Payment is made upon acceptance and entitles *VFW* magazine to First North American Serial Rights. Kill fees are paid if the writer is working on assignment and the article is not published. Contracts follow acceptance of articles. Please note that we do place selected articles from the magazine each month on *VFW's* Web site.

QUERIES

Do not query over the telephone. A one-page outline (theme, scope, organization) of the proposed article will save the author and editor valuable time and effort in determining the suitability of a piece for *VFW* magazine. Articles are submitted on a speculative basis for first-time contributors unless commissioned. Topics that coincide with an anniversary should be submitted at least four months in advance.

Use the query letter to demonstrate your knowledge and writing ability. Send along *published examples of your work*. Familiarize yourself thoroughly with *VFW* magazine before writing full-length features. Sample copies of the magazine are available upon request.

BIOGRAPHIES

Finally, please enclose a *brief biography* describing your military service and *expertise in the field* in which you are writing. Three sentences are generally sufficient. If you are a *VFW* member, let us know.