



**Veterans of Foreign Wars**

406 W. 34th St., Kansas City, MO 64111

816-756-3390 (phone) 816-968-1169 (fax)

[www.vfw.org](http://www.vfw.org); [magazine@vfw.org](mailto:magazine@vfw.org)

## Writer's Guidelines

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### **WRITING FOR VFW MAGAZINE**

VFW magazine is published by the Veterans of Foreign Wars at its national headquarters in Kansas City, Mo. VFW is among the nation's 50 largest magazines in circulation and the 8<sup>th</sup> largest association publication. It is published 10 times a year and has a readership of 1.3 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, 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. (Over the last 20 years, the magazine has covered WWII, Korea, Vietnam, the Persian Gulf and all subsequent wars extensively.)

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. **No first-person accounts, personal memoirs or personality profiles are accepted. Interview Q&As are not used.**

*We do not* accept poetry, fiction, op-eds, 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, but only after being requested by the editor. 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. 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 photos need to be a minimum of 1800x1200 pixels, or 4'x6' @ 300 dpi. If you are unsure of the technical settings, simply set the camera at the highest resolution. Color prints and transparencies are always acceptable.

## **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.

## **QUERIES**

Do not query over the telephone. Introduce your proposed article with a one-sentence e-mail describing the five "W's" (who, what, where, when and why) to determine 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 six 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 the writer's guidelines and *VFW* magazine **before** submitting manuscripts. Both are available at [www.vfwmagazine.org](http://www.vfwmagazine.org).

## **BIOGRAPHIES**

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