
Creative Writing Division Rules

Entries submitted into the Creative Writing Division will be judged based upon the merit of the original work, creative content, message clarity, use of language, originality of topic or idea, and overall strength. The top three creative writing winning entries will be included in a booklet that will be distributed by November, 2017.

Note:

- It is **no longer necessary to submit a video** along with the necessary paperwork for submission of creative writing entries.
- First place winners in the creative writing division **will not participate in the stage show performance at the 2017 National Veterans Creative Arts Festival**; some will be invited to attend writer interaction sessions and a writing seminar. The seminar will be led by a professional writing instructor.

The Creative Writing Division differs from categories in the Drama Division which are judged on **performance** qualities (such as stage presence, expressiveness, and interpretation) of an entry.

1. **First place ties in a category at the local competition MUST be re-judged at the local level as only one entry for each category will be accepted from each VA facility.** A formal competition is not required at the local level but is strongly encouraged. All eligible Veterans should be given the opportunity to participate regardless of degree of talent.
2. All entries submitted into the Creative Writing Division must be original compositions written solely by the eligible Veteran who is submitting the entry.
3. **All creative writing entries MUST be e-mailed** to Liz Nealy (ngraphics04@att.net) or **uploaded to the National Veterans Creative Arts Competition SharePoint site** (<https://vaww.visn23.portal.va.gov/stc/NVCACompetition>) in order for the entry to be accepted and judged at the national level. This applies to each entry in all creative writing categories.
 - Each entry must be submitted as a Word document. **Do not** send scanned attachments (PDF files).
 - Each entry must be double-spaced text typed in upper and lower case letters.
 - In the subject line of the email indicate the VA facility submitting the entry AND the title of the piece.
4. If an entry has won a gold medal on the national level of competition in any category it **MAY NOT BE** re-submitted into the Creative Writing division in a subsequent year.
5. Judges reserve the right to move an entry to the appropriate category or disqualify the entry if rules are not followed.
6. Collections of poems, essays, stories, etc. submitted as one entry will not be allowed.

Note: VA staff contact persons will be notified via E-mail with the 2017 competition results.

Creative Writing Division Categories

1. **Poetry – Humorous** - A verse composition of humorous nature, **no longer than 48 lines** in length, written by one eligible Veteran.
2. **Poetry – Inspirational** - Same as #1, but of an inspirational nature.
3. **Poetry – Patriotic** - Same as #1, but relating to American patriotism.
4. **Poetry – Other** - Same as #1, but does not more appropriately meet the definitions of poetry-humorous, inspirational or patriotic categories.
5. **Essay – Humorous** - An essay, **no longer than 3 double-spaced pages in length**, written in ordinary speech or writing (not poetry) by one eligible Veteran that is **a discussion of a topic from the author’s personal point of view** as influenced by subjective experience and personal reflection, is a non-fiction work, often expository, and humorous in nature. Entries submitted into this category must have an introduction, a statement of viewpoint, supportive points, and a conclusion summary.
6. **Essay – Inspirational** - Same as #5, but of an inspirational nature.
7. **Essay – Patriotic** - Same as #5, but reflective of American patriotism.
8. **Essay – Other** - Same as #5, but does not more appropriately meet the definitions of essay-humorous, inspirational or patriotic categories.
9. **Personal Experience – Humorous** - A story or situation of humorous content, **no longer than 3 double-spaced pages in length**, that is **written by one eligible Veteran in the first person** and conveyed about one’s self.
10. **Personal Experience – Inspirational** - Same as #9, but with inspirational content.
11. **Personal Experience – Patriotic** - Same as #9, but with content that relates to American patriotism.
12. **Personal Experience – Other** - Same as #9, but does not more appropriately meet the definitions of personal experience-humorous, inspirational or patriotic categories. Could include wartime-related experiences, though stories/situations with wartime-related content may also be suitable for personal experience-humorous, inspirational or patriotic categories.
13. **Short, Short Story** - A short story, **no longer than 500 words in length** that is written by one eligible Veteran. The story must have a beginning, middle, and an end. Entries received that contain more than 500 words will be disqualified.

14. **Monologue/Duologue** - Monologue is a part of a script written by an eligible Veteran for one actor. Duologue is a part of a script written by an eligible Veteran for two actors. **Entries in this category must be no longer than 3 double-spaced pages in length.**
15. **Special Recognition** - Individual or group. **All specific category rules still apply when entering the special recognition category.** Original entries that recognize individuals who exhibit creative expression through the use of creative writing while possessing significant physical or psychological limitations. The intent of this category is to reinforce the concept of the arts as therapy, where an individual uses artistic expression to facilitate successful treatment outcomes. Entries and their accompanying written statements from the Veteran's VA staff contact person should focus on how the arts are used by the individual(s) to rise above severe limitations.

Entries in this category **MUST** include:

- **Solo or Group Entry form**
- **A written statement/narrative** (25 to 225 words) by a VA staff person or the Veteran of why the Veteran is deserving of special recognition
- **Form 10-3203 – 2 pages (Consent for Production and Use of Verbal or Written Statements, Photographs, Digital Images, and/or Video or Audio Recordings by VA)** signed by the Veteran and VA staff contact person (pages 60-61)
- **Form 10-5345 – 1 page (Request For and Consent to Release Medical Records or Health Information)** signed by the Veteran (page 62).