

# have you wondered...

## ...about writing for the PSA Journal?

The Photographic Society of America (PSA) publishes a monthly *Journal* for its members. Virtually all writers are PSA members with an occasional invited piece in the monthly slick magazine, but no writer is paid. Material submitted for possible publication will not have been published before (including on-line publications). Importantly, **publication is not a “right” of membership—it is an opportunity.** The *Journal* does not accept all submissions: all material submitted is subject to approval and editing and the *Journal* requires images which have the quality to be published. Images can not be improved but the *Journal* can help with writing when submitted images are good. The *Journal* can edit; the *Journal* can re-write—but may only do so if time is available.

Deadlines do not apply to any material which is not scheduled by the Editor (death notices or obituaries, Diffuser, all feature articles, etc., are all in the non-scheduled class of material) thus no assumption can be made about when something might be published. Any and all material submitted for possible publication may sit a year or more until the time is right to work the article into a well-balanced issue.

But what should a writer remember for a well-written article? **Without a doubt, the most important thing is to know the readership!** In an age of more and every more digital, film techniques are now low on the “readership totem pole.” Be honest, even if film is not the choice of an author, he must now realize that the majority of the *Journal* readers are digital photographers, thus an article must relate to the times and be written about film **and** digital or about digital techniques alone, but usually no longer about film alone.

Without hesitation, **know the readership** is especially important when writing any travel-oriented article! The readership is the group known as *photographers*—sending a travelogue to the editor of the *PSA Journal* is the kiss of death for an article! The *Journal* readership does *not* want to know what the writer did on Monday, Tuesday or any other day or how many climbed on

the bus for some tour the author took! The readers want to know whether a photograph is best taken morning or afternoon (or both) and at what time of year and not that it was shot on Thursday of some writer’s trip! Writing an article just because the member took a neat or cool trip, is not writing for the *Journal* readership: it is often just an excuse to show one’s collection of record shots/snapshots. The *Journal* has much too many of those. An article without “photo-eze” (the *Journal*’s term for making an article relevant to the magazine) always has the *Journal* editor and Publications Vice President absolutely baffled! How many times must there be a request that all authors include whether a long lens or wide angle; morning or afternoon shot; spring but not summer—or whatever? Another article with beautiful images arrives in the e-mail of the Editor and is lacking what is needed. Surely this has been told so very many times in this magazine that any article should automatically include what the *Journal* requires! Yes, it is understood that the readers are photographers and so are the writers, so one more time: *all travel articles must include photography tips about shooting in any location, for the readers—no more pretty pictures without how or when to shoot them!*

### **How to prepare any submission (both scheduled articles and those submitted on speculation for possible publication):**

Type right into an email, or, type a Word document and attach it to an email. **NEVER** send a PDF file to the *Journal* Editor! The Editor needs to immediately return a PDF file to any author. Use **Arial** or **Times New Roman** (the editor chooses the final font). Do *not* justify the right-side margin; never embed images into the file (send all images separate from the printed word and always send twice too many so the editor has a choice, sending both horizontal and vertical images). Be certain to supply a short title for each image sent, not simply a number. **ALL** submitted articles must have the images by the author. The Editor is to return at once,

any article with someone else’s images! A smart author will not include reference to any specific image in his text so that if an image can be not used, the text will still make sense to the reader.

Avoid underlining, bold face as well as the use of all caps—those are editorial choices, not the author’s. Suggest a possible title, or two, but be flexible.

The author should send a clean head-and-shoulders photo of himself via email (please do not send a “snapshot” with a picket fence or a tree with bright leaves in the background—this is a photography organization and the author’s photo should be represented by a standard head-and-shoulders view).

The Editor will acknowledge receipt of the submitted piece within 10 days: all articles are approved by the Publications Vice President. Again, an accepted article may sit a year or even a bit more, before it might be used. If this is not satisfactory, please advise the Editor at the time of submission. Please do *not* ask the Editor *when* any given article will be published. Once accepted, it will be used when the situation works for the magazine.

**Finally! PSA thanks its writers; the Editor thanks all contributors and the Publications Vice President likewise adds thanks to each and every one who makes an effort to share his photographic expertise and experiences with fellow PSA members.** 🌟

### **Not accepted in the PSA Journal:**

- Stories before or after any PSA-recognized exhibition, including stories about special awards to participants
- Portfolios of a member’s work
- Articles by one author with images by others (except for the Society’s own news follow-up stories)
- Stories about past events of a club, council, chapter (those were discontinued in 1996)
- Photos of a row of people attending some event
- A photo sent for a cover: know the magazine to which you submit: the *Journal* cover *always* relates to a feature story in the magazine.