
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 2019.

All gold medal winners from the national competition in the creative writing division will be invited to attend a writer interaction session and a writing seminar at the 2019 National Veterans Creative Arts Festival. 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 Madge Scherer (Madge.Scherer@va.gov) 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 Microsoft Word document.
 - **Do not** send PDF attachments.
 - Each entry must be typed using size 12 font.
 - **Follow the rules for the category you are entering.** We will accept entries with minor deviations however this is not preferred.
 - The Veterans name, VA facility, and title of the piece must be included in the Word document.
 - In the subject line of the email indicate: **2019 CW Entry – VA facility submitting the entry, category number, title of piece**
4. If an entry has won a gold medal in the creative writing division at the national level 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 2019 competition results.



Creative Writing Categories



Important - Each entry must be typed using **size 12 font**.

New!

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 850 words**, 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 850 words**, 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 1,000 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 1,000 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 850 words in length.**

Creative Writing Special Recognition

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** also include:

- **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
- Consent form 10-3203 (on pages 59-60) and 10-5345 (page 19) must be signed and dated by the Veteran. The staff contact person submitting the entry for the Veteran should safeguard the signed consent forms at their VA facility.

Creative Writing Judging Criteria

Judges at the 2019 National level of competition will be ranking each creative writing entry based on the following criteria. Please consider using this score sheet for your local competitions.

Creative Writing Judging Score Sheet

Category Number:	Category Name:
Title of Entry:	

CRITERIA	POINTS									
Creative Content	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Message Clarity	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Use of Language	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Originality of Topic or Idea	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Overall Strength of Composition	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

TOTAL SCORE _____

Creative Writing Division Entry Submission Process



For the 2019 competition, **entry form information MUST BE submitted through the NVCA Competition SharePoint site via Excel format.** Contact any chairperson to receive the Excel document or contact Amy Kimbler via email at Amy.Kimbler@va.gov. You can also download the Excel document via the National Veterans Creative Arts Competition SharePoint Site:

<https://vaww.visn23.portal.va.gov/stc/NVCACompetition>


The National Veterans Creative Arts Competition SharePoint site can only be accessed by VA employees using a networked VA computer. Non-VA employees cannot access the SharePoint site.

VA staff contact person: Be sure to obtain additional Veteran contact information for your reference use only, to notify the Veteran of the competition results.

- All entries submitted to the national level of competition **must be uploaded or postmarked on or before Friday, March 22, 2019.**
- The National Veterans Creative Arts Chairpersons prefer entries be sent via the NVCA Competition SharePoint site however emailing the entries as separate Word documents to Madge.Scherer@va.gov will also be accepted.
- It is recommended to send your mailed items with the option to track the packages to ensure delivery.
- It is recommended to send a cover page with any paperwork that is faxed.

**Label each Creative Writing text entry in the following way:
CW-01-Title of Entry (St. Cloud, MN)**

Creative Writing Division Checklist

<p>Madge Scherer (EC117) National Dance Chairperson VA Health Care System 4801 Veterans Drive St. Cloud, MN 56303</p>	 New!	<p>Phone: (320) 252-1670 x7336 FAX: (320) 255-6327 E-mail: Madge.Scherer@va.gov</p>
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Checklist of Items Necessary for National Judging:	
✓	<p>Complete the Excel Creative Writing Division data entry tab on the worksheet for all entries being submitted into the Creative Writing Division. There are two tabs on the worksheet to complete:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Data Entry 2. Local Level Veteran Participation
✓	<p>Electronically submit a separate Microsoft Word document for each entry. The entry will only be accepted via E-mail to Madge Scherer at Madge.Scherer@va.gov or via upload to the NVCA Competition SharePoint site: https://vaww.visn23.portal.va.gov/stc/NVCACompetition</p>
✓	<p>Therapeutic Arts Scholarship (TAS) Nomination Form – Only if nominating a Veteran for consideration to attend the Festival based on a therapeutic objective. Each VA medical facility may only nominate <u>one</u> TAS to the national level of competition.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nomination Form (page 16) • Written Statement

Consent Form Information

It is no longer necessary to send the consent forms to the national chairpersons. The staff contact person submitting the entry(ies) for the Veterans should safeguard the signed consent forms **at their VA facility.**

2019 Local Level Veteran Participation



New!

New this year!

Staff will need to complete the Local Level Veteran Participation tab on the 2019 NVCA Competition Data Entry Excel document. Upload the Excel document to the NVCA Competition SharePoint site or you may email the document to Amy Kimbler at Amy.Kimbler@va.gov. **See Page 3 for more information.**

Be sure to answer the following questions:

	Entries	Veterans
Total number of Entries and Veterans who participated in your local VA facility competition in the CREATIVE WRITING Division		

2019 Creative Writing Division Entry Form



NOTE: For the 2019 competition, **entry form information MUST BE submitted through the NVCA Competition SharePoint site via Excel format.** See Page 3 for more information.
 Retain this paper entry form for your reference as needed.

Be sure the text entries are submitted in Word document format and are typed in 12 point font.

VA Staff: Obtain additional Veteran contact information to notify Veteran(s) of the competition results.

Category Number:	
Category Name:	
Title of Piece:	

Individual Entry – For entries submitted by one Veteran.

Veteran Name:	
*Veteran Phone Number: <i>(for local use only)</i>	

Group Entry – For an entry submitted by a group of Veterans into Category #15 – Special Recognition.

Group Name:	
Number of Veterans in Group:	

Last Name	First Name

Last Name	First Name

Veterans:

Initial

I/we confirm that this piece is completely my/our own original work.	
I/we have read all the rules for the Creative Writing division.	
If I win first place and receive an invitation, I understand that it is required that I attend the entire Festival event of October 30 – November 4, 2019 in Kalamazoo, MI.	

VA Staff:

Initial

I confirm that the Veterans entering the competition above meet eligibility criteria as specified on page 6 and are approved to enter the 2019 NVCA Competition as representatives of this VA facility.	
I confirm that the Veterans entering the competition above have signed the necessary consent forms (10-3203 and if necessary, 10-5345) to enter the 2019 NVCA Competition.	

Signature of Veteran(s)

VA Staff Contact Signature

***NOTE: THIS CONSENT FORM (10-3203) MUST BE SAFEGUARDED AT THE VETERAN'S VA FACILITY. THIS FORM DOES NOT NEED TO BE SENT TO THE CHAIRPERSONS FOR NATIONAL JUDGING.**

Every Veteran must sign this form to compete in the local and national level of competition.



Department of Veterans Affairs

CONSENT FOR PRODUCTION AND USE OF VERBAL OR WRITTEN STATEMENTS, PHOTOGRAPHS, DIGITAL IMAGES, AND/OR VIDEO OR AUDIO RECORDINGS BY VA

Name of individual whose statement, likeness, or voice is requested:

NOTE: The execution of this form does not authorize production or use of materials except as specified below. The specified material may be produced and used by VA for authorized purposes identified below, such as education of VA personnel, research activities, or promotional efforts. It may also be disclosed outside VA as permitted by law and as noted below. If the material is part of a VA system of records, it may be disclosed outside VA as stated in the "Routine Uses" in the "VA Privacy Act Systems of Records" published in the Federal Register.

The purpose of this form is to document your consent to the Department of Veterans Affairs' (VA) request to obtain, produce, and/or use a verbal or written statement or a photograph, digital image, and/or video or audio recording containing your likeness or voice. By signing this form, you are authorizing the production or use only as specified below.

You are NOT REQUIRED TO CONSENT TO VA's REQUEST to obtain, produce, and/or use your statement, likeness, or voice. Your decision to consent or refuse will not affect your access to any present or future VA benefits for which you are eligible.

You may rescind your consent at any time prior to or during production of a photograph, digital image, or video or audio recording, or before or during your provision of a verbal or written statement. You may rescind your consent after production is complete if the burden on VA of complying with that request is not unreasonable considering the financial and administrative costs and the ease of compliance of the number of parties involved and **the Veteran's VA facility and the Dept. of VA Office of National Veterans Sports Programs & Special Events.**

The photograph, digital image, and/or video or audio recording will be produced while I am (describe the activity or situation) **(To Be Completed by the Department of Veteran Affairs, if applicable)**

A participant in an adaptive sport or creative arts therapy program sponsored by the Veteran's VA facility and the Office of National Veterans Sports Programs and Special Events (NVSP&SE) and the American Legion Auxiliary.

Check at least one of the following (to be completed by VA)

I hereby voluntarily and without compensation authorize Department of Veterans Affairs NVSP&SE and the Veteran's VA facility to produce a photograph, digital image, and/or video or audio recording of me (or of the above named individual if the individual is legally unable to give consent).

I hereby voluntarily and without compensation authorize Department of Veterans Affairs NVSP&SE and the Veteran's VA facility to obtain or use a verbal or written statement from me (or the of the above named individual if the individual is legally unable to give consent).

I consent to allowing VA to record and use a verbal or written statement, or produce and use photographs, digital images, and video or audio recording for the purpose(s) identified below:

This product will be used: (NOTE: At least one of these boxes must be checked as well as a purpose described below) (to be completed by VA)

Internally (stay within VA) Externally (shared outside VA)

Please check the applicable purpose(s) (to be completed by VA)

Promotional Efforts:

Internal Publication (only VA) External publication (publicly available)

Other (Specify): Newspapers, radio stations, television stations, participant profiles, souvenir program booklet and DVD, and other media outlets. In addition, VA may release this information to sponsor organizations of the National Veterans Sports Programs and Special Events in the form of other media products to promote the positive aspects of creative arts therapy.

Research Activities: Study

Education Purposes:

Presentation Conference Publication in a Journal Training

Other (Specify):

VA ONLY Use:

Performance Improvement Quality Improvement Health Care Operations

Other (Specify):

All of the Above

NOTE: Do not sign this form unless one or more of the boxes above has been checked.

I have read and understand the foregoing, and I consent to the use of a verbal or written statement from me, and/or of my likeness and/or voice as specified for the above-described purpose(s). I understand that no royalty, fee, or other compensation of any kind will be made to me by the United States for such use. I understand that consent to obtain, produce, and/or use a verbal or written statement, photograph, digital image, and video or audio recording containing my likeness or voice is voluntary, and my refusal will not adversely affect my access to any present or future VA benefits for which I am eligible. I further understand that I may, at any time, rescind my consent prior to or during production of a photograph, digital image, or video or audio recording. I also understand that I may rescind my consent after production is complete if the burden on VA of complying with that request is not unreasonable considering the financial and administrative costs, the ease of compliance, and the number of parties involved.

Print Veteran Full Name (First and Last Name)	Veteran Signature	Date
<i>Permission Obtained By (TO BE COMPLETED BY VA)</i> Print VA Employee Full Name	Title	Date
<i>Signature of Person Obtaining Consent (TO BE COMPLETED BY VA)</i> Print VA Employee Full Name	VA Employee Signature	Date

IMPORTANT: If VA is providing or releasing any patient health or demographic information with the verbal or written statement, photograph, digital image, or video or audio recording, VA Form 10-5345, Request for and Authorization to Release Medical Records or Health Information, is required prior to the release of such data to any source outside VA.