

Writers' Guide



Dear readers and writers,

Each monthly issue of *Vista* includes approximately seven stories and several poems. In addition, we print continuing features such as Food, Kingston Heritage, Green Matters, and Great Heavens.

If you are interested in sharing your stories in *Vista*, the following questions and answers should be of help.

What does *Vista* publish? Our mandate is to publish original work from people in the Kingston area (not necessarily members), including personal memoirs, essays, and poetry.

Who decides on whether a submission will be published? Members of our Contributing Editors Committee review all the creative work submitted to *Vista*, and they make the decisions. They meet once a month, and their job is to select those stories and poems they believe will be of interest to our readers. The Contributing Editors particularly look for personal stories told well.

Will *Vista* change my story? After a story has been accepted by the Contributing Editors, we have a standard copy-editing process, as do all publications. Following “house style,” the copy-editors correct any punctuation, spelling, and grammatical problems, as well as obstacles to structural flow. We also make decisions about which month might be the best publication time for a story, depending on its theme.

Who owns the published story or poem? In all cases, the copyright of printed material remains with the author. *Vista* does not pay for stories, poems, photographs, or drawings.

How long should my submission be? The maximum length for a story is about 1,800 words – approximately three printed pages. A one-page story is about 700 words. In each issue we try to include stories of varying lengths. Features have a maximum length of 600 words. The maximum poem length is 25 lines.

What kinds of stories does *Vista* want? In general, our readers seem to enjoy what we call “slice of life” stories – rather like a mental movie of a special time or event or person. We also look for diversity in stories, because our readers are interested in seeing the world from many points of view.

While we do not publish obituaries or travelogues, we welcome stories of your adventures big and small, time spent in other countries, and encounters with interesting people, unusual occasions, and intriguing customs – Eureka! moments as well as quiet observations on life’s changes. We are always on the lookout for diverse stories for the holiday seasons.

When should the story or poem be sent? Our schedule requires that we plan ahead by about three months. For example, an appropriate New Year’s story for the January issue would need to be in our hands in October. Otherwise, it will be held over in our story bank until the following year.

Where should I send my story or poem? Email your submission to Vista@SeniorsKingston.ca. We prefer to receive submissions by email; however, we can also accept work in typewritten form at The Seniors Centre, addressed to Editor, *Vista*. (Whether in email or in print, please don’t format your work in elaborate fonts or creative design: keep it simple.) Be sure to put your name on any work being submitted.

Photographs can be sent to us digitally as separate files, or the photos can be dropped off at The Seniors Centre. Photos will be promptly returned; however, usually stories and poems will not be returned.

Don’t forget our features! We welcome submissions to our various features and columns, including:

- Bookshelf
- Talk of the Town
- Transitions

As well, we invite suggestions for guest columns. Stuck for an idea? See Story Starters in a current *Vista*.