

Streetvibes Writers Guidelines

Streetvibes welcomes contributions from writers. We depend on volunteer writers and photographers to help us tell stories about issues and people that the corporate media tend to overlook. By documenting the struggle against poverty, racism and violence, writers and photographers perform a vital service to the community.

Streetvibes is not a newsletter; it's a newspaper. *Streetvibes* is not a propaganda sheet; it's a newspaper. *Streetvibes* is not an open forum for anything that anyone wants to publish; it's a newspaper.

As a newspaper, our primary need is for news and feature stories. The most valuable way for writers to help *Streetvibes* – and the best way to have your work published in *Streetvibes* – is by interviewing interesting peoples about interesting topics and then writing what you learn.

Essays and columns are a very small part of a newspaper's mission. What we need are news and feature stories. The word "I" will hardly ever appear in a news or feature story. Direct quotations from other people are almost certainly more interesting than your opinion.

If you want to write, but don't know how to start, we'll be glad to work with you. There are lots of stories waiting to be told, and there are different ways to tell them. We want to encourage creativity and professionalism, the better to serve our readers.

Here are some general guidelines for articles:

- **News stories:** 800 to 1,200 words, based on interviews and documents, providing facts, information and analysis of important issues and events;
- **Feature stories:** 800 to 1,200 words, based on interviews and personal observations, providing facts, information and insight about individuals and organizations;
- **Local news briefs:** 200 to 400 words, providing basic information about noteworthy events in the community we serve;
- **Guest columns:** 800 words, offering personal opinion and perspective on topical issues and trends.

Remember that these are general guidelines. Writers shouldn't feel obliged to "fill space." Sometimes the best way to tell a story is in a concise, restrained fashion. Some stories, however, require a longer treatment. If you think a story needs more space, discuss it with the editor in advance. This will provide more opportunity for planning and for editing the story in a way that improves the content.

Deadlines are very important. The best way to keep your story from being printed is to miss the deadline. Always let the editor know if you expect to be late.

Finally, treat the editor as a helpful resource. When you have questions about how to do an interview or write a story, call the editor. It's the editor's job to help you.

Thank you for your interest in writing for *Streetvibes*.

Gregory Flannery

Editor

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