

Submission Guidelines for *Focal Points*

Please submit all inputs for *Focal Points* to editor@vps-va.org

Newsletter Submissions:

Timing:

- I try to publish the newsletter about 1 week before the first meeting of each month... i.e., the 1st Wednesday. I prefer to receive inputs with as much lead time as possible, but there is an **input cutoff date 10 days prior to the 1st Wednesday**. The only exceptions are (a) the competition results (for months where the 1st Wednesday falls on the 1st or 2nd of the month) and (b) late-breaking updates.
- I send the newsletters with recipients' email addresses in bcc so that their privacy is preserved.

Informative Content: VPS Board and Committee Chairs need to provide the following inputs each month to ensure that *Focal Points* is an informative, valuable newsletter:

- President: inspirational or informational message... no specific topic... writer's choice.
- Competitions:
 - If it is a themed competition, then give a statement that uniquely and completely defines the theme so that there is no confusion about what meets the theme criteria... should be the same definition that has been provided to the judge.
 - Competition Results... Class & category, winner name, award given, title of image. (NOTE: Please contact me for a MS Word template in which to type the competition information. I need to fit it all in a standard 3.787" wide column and the reformatting can be a bear!)
- Judges: which month... judge's name and bio notes (if available)... his/her photo specialties or preferences... his/her statement of judging expectations, objectives, and criteria... URL of judge's web site

- Speaker: when... speaker name and bio notes (if available)... topic and any descriptive material on the presentation... his/her photo specialties or preferences... URL of speaker's web site
- Field Trip: when, where, subject matter, special opportunities, special equipment recommended, meeting/coordination/carpooling information, point-of-contact (phone and email), and other information that will "sell" the trip... URL of any related web sites
- Forums: when... topic(s), point-of-contact, etc.

Value-Added Content: Individual VPS members are encouraged to contribute their own work to *Focal Points*, including the following nice-to-haves & value-added items:

- Quality images for the monthly page 2-3 Member Gallery... see guidelines below.
- Reports on new shooting venues and your experiences while shooting there (if applicable)... hint, hint... images, too
- Your experience on recent field trips... hint, hint... images.
- Your experience with new equipment, software, printers, papers, web sites, etc.
- Your experience with new shooting or image-processing techniques... tips, hints, problem solutions, etc.
- Information you stumble upon regarding upcoming exhibits, workshops, meetings, etc. While I get a lot of this stuff directly from the various sources, you may just have one that I haven't seen, so send it along and let me sort out the duplicates.

Submission Guidelines:

- Documents
 - Please send inputs in the form of a **MS Word** file (.doc), preferably **Office 2007** version.
 - Alternatively, an .RTF or .TXT file will do nicely, too.

- Any items submitted in .PDF format will **NOT** be added to Focal Points.
- If you compose in MS Works, WordPerfect, or another word processor, please save the file as a DOC, RTF, or TXT.
- Whatever word processor you use, PLEASE don't get clever with text boxes, embedded images, lists, or other special formatting... all your hard work only makes extra work for me as I have to undo it all before I paste your stuff down in the MS Publisher template for the newsletter.
- I prefer to receive files in **11-point Arial** font... anything else will be converted before it is pasted down in the newsletter, which is extra work.
- Single-space only... hit <Enter> an extra time to make an extra space between paragraphs... PLEASE do not build in space-and-a half or double spacing as it has a tendency to “hang around” in the Publisher document and messes things up when I least expect it.
- Use **bold** for emphasis (sparingly!) and/or *italics* for highlighting names of organizations, image titles, etc. ... no crazy underlining or “weird” fonts.
- Images
 - Send images as JPG files... **separate from and not pasted into your text**... if you want an image in a specific location in the text, put a placeholder at the appropriate place in the text, e.g., <crocodile_eating_tourist.jpg>
 - Member Gallery... 1200x800 for stand-alone images (0.5 - 2.0 Mb) for, e.g., the member gallery page or an image that you recently sold or won a prize in an exhibit... these are usually displayed in a larger size
 - Article Illustrations... 450x300 for illustrative images (100-250 Kb) that will be embedded with or connected to an article.

- Err in favor of large images rather than small ones... reproduction quality counts!