

Madison

The magazine of lifestyle and business

Writer's Guidelines

About us: *Madison Magazine* is a monthly lifestyle and business publication, which began in 1978. We are family-owned, and other holdings and affiliates include WISC-TV3 and the websites wisbusiness.com and Channel3000.com. We have a circulation of more than 18,500 and a total readership of 75,000.

Editorial content is divided into these main sections: Your Town, OverTones, Habitat, Fine Dining, the features section, Health Watch, and Madison Business.

Your Town is a mixture of small articles, briefs and profiles of people, events, goods, arts, humor and entertainment. These items range from 50 to 300 words in length.

Because our readers have a strong interest in arts and entertainment, our OverTones and Fine Dining sections are designed to give them a guide to the city, including a restaurant guide, an events calendar, and meatier articles on the arts, dining out and more. Habitat has its own cover and the design style is driven by spectacular photography of homes and gardens. The features section, or the "well," is where our longer (700 to 3,000 words) in-depth articles run. Subjects vary, but include personal and professional profiles, government, science, medicine, environment, education, family, travel, money and health. We also regularly publish service pieces, such as top lawyers, best doctors, suburbs ratings, Best of Madison readers' poll, Best of Madison Business and more.

The business section was conceived to lead the market in coverage of the New Economy – the high-tech and biotech industry that encompasses university science, research and education as well as industry trends, profiles, Q&As with area business leaders, general interest articles, columns, and a regular feature on the job market. We cover the traditional "old economy" stories, such as manufacturing, land use and development, agriculture and others, but the main focus is on new technology and how it drives today's marketplace.

Editors are open to any ideas as long as they relate to Madison and the surrounding area or would be of interest to readers in this area. Because of our two-month or longer lead time, articles must have a long-term perspective that is as readable several months from now as it is today.

We have several columns: politics is written by former Capitol reporter Jeff Mayers, who now runs two online news services, WisPolitics.com and WisBusiness.com; John Roach, a native Madisonian and award-winning screenwriter, writes a monthly column called "Out There;" our business column rotates between business strategist Kay Plantes, futurist Rebecca Ryan and others; and Michael Kwas, wine director at the renowned L'Etoile Restaurant, provides advice on the best and most affordable wines for any and all occasions. Our most recent addition is a food column called "Genuine Articles." Written by former restaurateur Nancy Christy and her husband – and Madison Magazine editorial director – Neil Heinen, the column is designed not only to document the local food and dining scene but also to excite and inspire readers to think about how a thriving local food market can enhance a city's sense of pride and place because how we eat is a symbol of who we are. The food and wine columns are part of our dining section, which features a food or dining-related article each month as well as shorter pieces on food news, such as bar and restaurant openings, festivals and seasonal suggestions.

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Queries and specs: Article queries are welcome. Please allow several weeks for the editors to review the query. In some cases, editors may ask the writer to keep the story on file and resubmit it at a later date. Stories may be written on spec, but because they are unsolicited, editors may not respond. All prospective writers must submit a resume and clips.

Contract: After a story is assigned, the writer will receive a contract in the mail within three working days. The original contract must be signed and returned within three working days. New writers are also asked to sign a W-9 form for tax purposes.

Story assignments: The writer will receive a one-page story brief (via e-mail, unless otherwise requested) that includes the article outline, sidebar assignments, due date, month of publication and freelance payment.

Word count: Content space is always tight, and editing time is limited, so please write to the assigned word count. If an article is too long, the writer may be asked to rework the article to the appropriate length. Editors reserve the right to edit for length, accuracy and tone. Final edits are routinely sent back for review.

List of sources: For editing and fact-checking purposes, all writers must include a list of sources and contact information with each article submission.

Deadlines: Writer's deadlines are generally scheduled at least one month in advance of the magazine issue for which they are assigned. They are firm and rarely negotiable. Missed deadlines interfere with the edit, arts and design staff, who strive to meet internal deadlines that are integral to the magazine's success. The magazine reserves the right to cancel a writer's article if it isn't turned in by the deadline. In extreme circumstances, the magazine reserves the right to refuse payment if a writer's tardiness severely affects the production of the magazine. In addition, please carefully review the writer's contract for more specific line items related to percentage decreases in fees for tardy work.

Payment: Payment varies with the length of the article, degree of difficulty, a writer's experience, and amount of research and interviews. Payment is issued on the 5th of the month in which the article appears.

Kill fee: If an assigned article is turned in on time and meets all other requirements, but fails to be published, the writer will receive a kill fee of 1/3 of the agreed upon writer's fee.

Expenses: The agreed upon fee for an article includes any expenses incurred in the reporting and writing process. Added expenses (excess mileage, photo development) require magazine pre-approval.

On-line publication:

Any story published in Madison Magazine will be considered for publication at madisonmagazine.com, Channel3000.com, or wisbusiness.com. For on-line rights, please refer to the writer's agreement.