



News Coordinator's Guide

Reporting news can be an exciting adventure for everyone. The news coordinator's job is to tell the community about the club, its activities, and special member activities such as a member who takes flowers to a person who is ill.

Involve a number of members in the news committee. As chairman, it is important to make each person feel a part of the group.

One of the main things for a news coordinator to remember is the difference between news and publicity. News is something which answers the questions "who, what, when, where, why, and how." News is timely and of interest to a number of people. Publicity is promoting an event by using posters, paid advertising, etc. An example of a news item is a member who has won an award. Publicity is the information gathered to promote a club fish fry.

A story should be:

- (1) reported promptly,
- (2) important,
- (3) have local interest,
- (4) unusual, and
- (5) interesting.



Preparing News Stories

- Get acquainted with the newspaper editor or other person who handles club news. Find out how he/she wants the story written.
- Determine in which format the newspaper prefers to receive the story: hand-delivered, submitted electronically via e-mail, or in some other format.
- Study some news stories in the paper. This helps in writing better stories and intensifying the kind of stories that the newspaper wants.
- Newspaper material is called "copy." Handwrite or type on every other line and on one side of the paper only.
- Put the writer's name, address, e-mail address, and telephone number at the top of the page so that the editor can call if he/she has a question about the copy.
- Write in the third person. Say: "The members decided," not "We decided."
- Make sentences short. Leave out personal opinions. Don't say, "Everyone had a good time." Let the reader judge.
- Check that all names are spelled correctly. Tell who the guest speakers are and what they talked about.
- In the first paragraph, feature some interesting or important fact. Always answer the question "who, what, when, where, why, and how." Write no more than 40 to 50 words in any paragraph.
- In the paragraphs that follow, give the information in the order of importance. Taper off your story with the least important details at the end. This is known as the pyramid style of writing. The end is where the editor starts cutting if there isn't room for the whole story.



- Write the story on an event before the event rather than after it, if at all possible. If a story is not turned into the newspaper office within 12 hours after an event, it usually is too late for use.
- Do not feel badly if the story you write is cut down, changed, or does not appear. Every editor has only so much space. In order to get news and feature stories into that space, he/she must be selective with what is included.



Questions for Thought

1. What is the job of the news coordinator?
2. What ways can the club benefit from news?
3. Which club activities are newsworthy?
4. How can the reader's curiosity and interest be aroused?
5. What are some ideas for feature stories on members' projects?
6. How can the entire club be involved in writing new stories?
7. How can news stories help your club in the community?

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