



Local Press and Radio

These are key outlets for your publicity. Building good and regular relationships with the News Desk and Editors of your local Newspaper is essential for on-going cooperation. The same applies to the 'Talk Show Hosts' and Editors of the local Radio Station if you want them to publicise or feature your major Rotary events. Remember that staff changes quite quickly, keep contacts up to date.

As with 1070 News and Events, local press and radio welcome and need interesting and well-presented 'copy' with good lead times. They are interested in 'Rotary in Action' featuring local community activities. However, they will not welcome 'cheque presentations' or photographs of Rotarians at lunch etc; this is a not good image for Rotary and generally not interesting for Newspaper readers.

The following tips will help when compiling an article for a Newspaper:

Story or Non-Event?

The biggest problem non-journalists have is recognizing what is a story...and there is no definitive answer to this question. A good rule of thumb is if you can't wait to tell a friend about an incident, then it's probably a story. If you are not sure, ring the Newsdesk for advice. Do not assume that the Newspaper already knows about the incident.

Making a Start

There is no great mystery to writing a press release. You are not expected to write copy which can go straight into the Newspaper. All that is needed are the facts and a daytime telephone number so you can be contacted.

Please use the basic "Five Ws" – Who, What, Why, When, and Where – are a good start when compiling your article. To the "Ws" you can add "How"!

The Press Release

Start your press release with a short headline so the Newspaper can see at a glance what it is all about, no more than one A4 sheet, for instance...

Northamptonshire Young Farmer wins national ploughing championship.
Or 350 died from polio in the Congo

The first paragraph should contain what you think will be the most interesting facts for the readers.



Follow this with the rest of the story and don't worry if you think you are giving too much information. It is always best to put too many facts in your press release rather than leave some out. When the reporters tackle the story, they will use what, in their experience, are the relevant and interesting facts.

Don't forget that people's ages and addresses are important together with their first and surnames, not just their initials. Also do not assume that reporters have local knowledge of the geography and history of the area so please add these details in your article.

If you want readers to contact you for further information or, for instance, to buy tickets for an event, put this information in the last paragraph. End your press release with the words "Ends".

Finally do not use acronyms. A list of Rotary Acronyms is included to the rear of the document. You may know what DG stands for but generally members of the public have no idea. You will be amazed at the list.

Contacts

Below "Ends" give the daytime telephone numbers of anyone who the Newspaper may want to contact if further information is needed.

Pictures

Newspapers have teams of photographers and, given a little notice, they can often cover events for you. Although you may want to supply your own photographs or negatives it is best use digital images of fine resolution to e-mail your picture. If you do, please save it as a reasonable-sized jpeg. Please note that "Thumbnails" are generally of no use to a Newspaper.

Jon Whowell the Public Relations Officer for the team advises not to send in a photograph initially but to state that a photograph is available and to telephone the reporter soon after sending the email.

Contact details for the Communications Team can be found at
www.rotary1070.org/communications