

# WRITING PRESS RELEASES

Did you ever wonder why your press releases were not being picked up by local newspapers? There could be several possible reasons; ask yourself these questions:

- Is my release something of interest to a newspaper editor?
- Something that readers would want to read about?
- Does it have a human element?
- Is it intended only to be a short announcement?
- Am I formatting it correctly?
- Am I sending it to the appropriate writers or editors?

In March, Hollis Towns, Executive Editor of the Asbury Park Press, hosted a networking event for the GOTCC at the lovely Press HQ, where he served as the keynote speaker. Even the most experienced business people in the room did not leave without some insightful information. His main point - add the human twist. For example, if you are a dentist who specializes in a non-traditional type of dentistry, include about a success story about one of your patients.

Since some releases crossover departments, if you are not sure which editor to send it to, call and ask.

If your intention is to write a business announcement, then keep it short and sent it to the Business Editor.

Most releases are now emailed; and most newspapers, magazines, Websites, cable and radio stations provide a staff directory and their emails addresses online. According to Dennis Carmody, Business and Coastal Monmouth Bureau Editor of the Asbury Park Press, you should keep your releases simple. Do not write in a flowery manner; it will be rewritten anyway. Keep it short and straight forward.

Follow this format when writing a press release.

- Write it on your business letterhead
- Include your working title centered and underlined
- Underneath on the left, include the desired date of printing (it can state "For Immediate Release")
- Opposite on the right, include your name, phone number and email address
- Make your margins two inches on each side, and double space between lines. This provides the editors room for making notes.
- At the end of your release, centered on the bottom of the page, write - END -
- If your release is on two pages, centered on the bottom of the first page write - MORE - and then begin the second page with "Page 2 - Smith's Sub Shop."

While you should always include who, what, when, where and why, remember that there could be more than one of each.

## SAMPLE FORMAT

Miami Rotary Club  
1234 Miami Blvd.  
Miami, Florida 11111

### Rotary Bake Sale for College Scholarships

For Release in July

Contact: Mimi Jones  
555.555.6543  
mj@miamirotary.com

The Miami Rotary Club is holding a bake sale from 12 noon until 4 pm on Friday, May 23rd, 2018 at the Miami Post Office located at 1234 Main Street. The funds raised at the sale will benefit the Rotary college scholarship program. The Coast Guard Orchestra will be performing from noon until 2 pm. Last year the event raised \$4000 which provided four hard working Miami High School seniors with a \$1000 scholarship each. If you are interested in baking for the sale, please contact Mary Ames at 555.555.5555 by Monday, May 19. If you would like to volunteer to help out at the event, please call Mark Adams at 555.555.4321 as soon as possible. If you like sweets, stop by for a wide variety including homemade donuts, pastries, cheesecake, brownies, cookies, cupcakes, cakes, pies and tarts.

- END -